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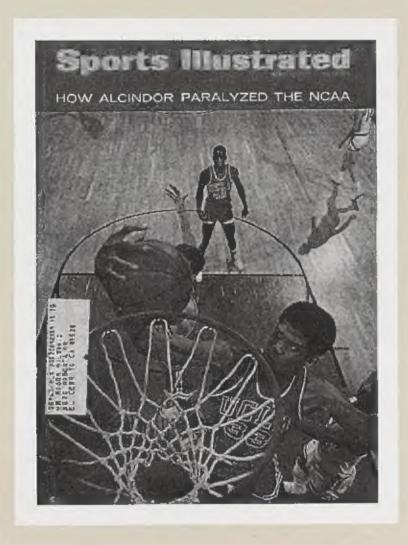
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Sports Illustrated, April 3, 1967 Editor: Andre Laguerre Art Director: Richard Gangel

# Introduction

Sports Illustrated, that's the magazine that made a lasting impression on me, more than any other magazine I can think of. The reason is simple: Sports Illustrated painted a picture of America and American life that I fell in love with and that I continue to idealize when the need arises.

While at the time I was only barely able to read the articles (I was 12 or so, and English was my second language), the mixture of photography, writing and advertisements served up by Sports Illustrated was enough to temporarily transport me to a world of fantasy. There's one image in particular that sticks in my mind, an advertisement for a large insurance company. In it, a little boy is raking leaves in front of a large suburban home on a tree-lined street somewhere in New England. Stingray bike on the sidewalk, dad's wood-paneled station wagon in the driveway. The photo was saturated with the orange red and golden brown colors of fallen leaves and late afternoon winter sunshine.

To me, this kid's life seemed pretty damn perfect.

I couldn't see through the deceit. I totally bought it; I was mesmerized by it. Obviously, I wasn't interested in life insurance, I simply wished it was me raking leaves. Like Americans hung up on Paris and brie and café au laits, I was dreaming of a world more colorful, more exciting, and less overcast than the one I inhabited. I'm sure the SI editors never considered a Dutch kid 3,000 miles away as part of their demographics, but Sports Illustrated delivered an illusion as if it was created for me alone.

While layout and design were alien notions not to be discovered by me until years later. I was nonetheless attracted to many things graphic. The pages of SI were filled with photographs of players in brightly colored uniforms boasting imaginative team logos set against the backdrop of bigger-than-life type laid out against huge expanses of grass, hardwood floors or ice rinks. Nobody dresses up sports like the Americans. This often makes me wonder why it is that a country able to produce such brilliant vernacular sports graphics overlooks its unique heritage when it comes to the design of the Olympics. The graphics for the Los Angeles and Atlanta Olympics can easily be considered great graphic design, but more so when seen within the narrow context of graphic design than

There was one store in my hometown that sold Sports Illustrated. It was on the other side of town. I still remember bicycling home through the ice cold Dutch winter weather, white knuckled hands frozen ice cold to the handle bars with Sports Illustrated tucked underneath my coat. It's hard to imagine any magazine in existence today that I'd make such sacrifices for.

the popular world of sports. But here I stray. Magazines is the topic.

There are other magazines that made an impact, though. When in art school, in the mid-70s, Herb Lubalin's U&lc (published by ITC) seemed vibrant, particularly when

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contrasted with the rather dull corporate identity design occupying most design annuals in the 70s. U&lc was altogether on a singular trip heading away from the pack, with Lubalin's visual puns adding a welcome bit of humor to the overly serious problem-solving world of 70s design. And there's a little known resurrection of Arts & Architecture, designed by Rip Georges, published in the mid-80s that was just too cool to be true. Which, I guess it was, since it existed for only a few years. Those die-cut pages, paper variety throughout each issue and immaculate Japanese full color printing mustn't have helped the bottom line much.

At the time, it was difficult to imagine magazine design could get much better, though. Generously spaced bold Futura and Bodoni type poured into dynamically shaped columns set alongside full bleed, full color architectural photography, and the whole magazine filled out with similarly cool early Ron Rezek and L.A. Eyewear advertisements. Arts & Architecture seemed like the epitome of magazine design. Looking at it now, however, it's difficult to imagine what the excitement was all about — a fate reserved for many magazines considered innovative at one time. The Face, for instance, set the world of magazine design ablaze in the mid-80s. And while those early issues still hold their own, they now look surprisingly subdued. No fault of their own, though. The copycats diluted the intentions of the originators by generally misappropriating their ideas and wearing them thin in the process, leaving both original and copy looking stale.

While the odds are heavily stacked against survival, let alone success, magazines continue to be published and remain high on the preferred projects lists of designers. Henry Brimmer, the art director and editor of *Photo Metro*, once told me about being "bit by the magazine snake" and, once bit, how difficult it was to do much else. I've come to fully understand that remark. Not only do magazines play a dominant role in shaping and reflecting our culture; there are few places where the combination of image and text are played out more intensely, providing the ultimate playground for designers. With each issue, previous failures can be revisited, while successful solutions can be built upon and fine-tuned. Or, as William Owen put it in his book *Modern Magazine Design*, "There's no better place to make mistakes."

For some unexplainable reason, I tossed out those two or three years' worth of Sports Illustrated issues. Time must pass before you realize how good certain magazines really are. Looking back, Sports Illustrated stands out for me. And while I haven't bought an issue since, whenever I'm in my dentist's waiting room and spot a copy, it's what I pick up. And I read with interest about the Golden State Warriors and their continued need for a big center, or whether Jerry Jones should or should not have the right to have his Dallas Cowboys commit to an all out endorsement of Nike. But the real thrill that SI used to generate is gone. Now, all it offers me is a way to pass time while taking in some cultural trivia. There's no lasting impression, though.

This made me wonder. When it comes to magazines, which ones do we remember best, and what about them is it that makes them so memorable? In an earlier issue I've suggested, as have others before me, to perhaps discuss design in a wider context. Designers have a tendency to look at design as being separate from what it communicates. They tend to isolate

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design from content. It's understandable, since designers are visually inclined, but it often results in an obsession with surface style.

With this issue I'm attempting, with fuzzy focus, to look at the larger picture. I asked five people whom I admire greatly, and who can offer intriguing angles from which to analyze and talk about magazines, to take this to task. To force some kind of definite judgment, each person was asked to choose one magazine that made a lasting impact on them and then to expound on their choice, and, if they so desired, the general topic of magazines.

This, then, is an experiment.

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#6 KENNETH FITZGERALD
Creem

# 12 #
Denise Gonzales Crisp
People

\$58 \$
DANIEL X. O'NEIL
Star & Globe

Nancy Bonnell-Kangas
Wet

# 72 #
MARTIN VENEZKY
Billboard

Kenneth FitzGerald currently teaches in the Foundation Department at Montserrat College of Art in Beverly, MA and does freelance design for corporate America. He is considering compiling a design lexicon to be called *The Printer's Devil's Dictionary*.

Denise Gonzales Crisp is the only graphic designer employed at Super Stove, her studio in Los Angeles. She also teaches courses at Art Genter College of Design and California Institute of the Arts. Deborah Griffin is a visiting faculty at the Institute for Theory Appliance. Her book, I Want My Envy. Please, can be found on remainder tables nationwide. Any similarity between Ms. Griffin and Ms. Gonzales Crisp is purely intentional.

Poet Daniel X. O'Neil is the author of Bricks, Memo To All Employees, Deluses: Psycho-Battle In One Act, Annotated Bibliography of American Poetry Told Through the Pulitzer Prize, and the eight-part verse essay; Boilerplate: Koreshians, Potential Rioters, and Bureaucratic Complicity in American Self-Destruction, subtitled Being a List of Eight Ways in Which the Dead at Waco Were A Lot Like the Rest of Us. He lives in Chicago.

Nancy Bonnell-Kangas is a writer living in Columbus, Ohio with Greg and their two sons. She edits Nancy's Magazine, a biennial retort to Reader's Digest et al., and reads poetry on her biweekly radio show, "This Won't Hurt Much."

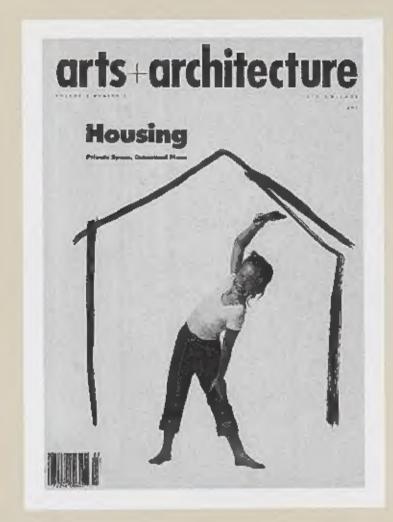
Martin Venezky is the art director at Speak, a San Francisco-based pop culture magazine, where he manages to utilize a highly engaging typographic style without compromising legibility. He also teaches experimental typography at California College of Arts and Grafts.

CENTER INSERT

News of the Whirled

(P) REVIEW
by Kenneth FitzGerald





Arts+Architecture, Vol. 3, No. 3, 1984 Publisher/Editor in Chief: Barbara Goldstein Art Director: Rip Georges





# On Creem Magazine 1970-1976

Since Creem was? is? a rock-n-roll magazine, you know the risk I'm taking here celebrating its 70s glory days. That's right — the boring old fart factor. Some aging guy swoons over an artyfact of his bygone youth, boring an audience with different, often younger, experiences. He imbues the love-object with enough aura to outglare the noonday sun — that then toasts and warps all those headed-to-trade-in LPs stacked in the back seat of his car. The ecstatic wax starts flowing but, for you, the illumination is no better than candlelight. I know the way by heart; you're all stumbling over mental furniture. While I promise this isn't a complete nostalgia trip, the essential argument is personal.

I won't be placing Creem on any sort of pedestal for you to admire. If anything, it's the stray trash blowing 'round the foot of the pillar. I'm only mildly regretful at tossing my old copies. But it immediately came to mind for this article. While one prominent, obvious reason for the choice presented itself, there had to be more. I began writing this as much to discover why I chose Creem as to explain.

The foremost reason I value *Creem* magazine of this time is that it was the first home of writer Lester Bangs. When people list rock-n-rollers cursedly cut down in their prime, I always include LB. And right up at the top, too. He's right alongside those flawed herces he so insightfully and movingly eulogized: Lennon, Elvis. That's how important he was for critical writing on popular music and the culture that surrounds it. To write about music culture is to write about our *entire* culture and he pegged it regularly. Read Where Were You When Elvis Died? (published not in *Creem* but in the *Village Voice*; he had moved on and upward) and you get a succinct and insightful description of the postmodern condition in human terms.

I would certainly direct anyone who loves great writing (and/or music) to Bangs's posthumous collection *Psychotic Reactions and Carburetor Dung*. In his introduction, editor and friend Greil Marcus (author of *Lipstick Traces*, a landmark consideration of music and culture that owes a great deal to Bangs) contributes a more comprehensive portrait of Bangs than I could hope to provide. Mostly, the book contains a cross section of writing that is unmatched in its passion, insight, and honesty.

When I'm writing – particularly something like this – it's Lester Bangs's echo I'm chasing. Our lives are entirely dissimilar but there are aspects of his personality with which I strongly identify. One is a conviction that you must give everything a hearing – especially "low" culture detritus like pop music. Lester said it was okay to find profundity here and regularly revealed it. He expressed how and why these rattles and hums generated by frequently tawdry, egotistic, arrested-development cases added vital elements to life. And yea, may even provide life's meaning. (See...rock-n-roll isn't so different from design.)

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What I emotionally connected with in Bangs's writing was — unsurprisingly — his irreverence. Unsurprising because he was the king of rock-n-roll disdain for pompous charlatans and going-through-the-motion hacks. His bona fides in this area were impeccable: banishment from Rolling Stone's review pages for six years due to insufficient respect for the lower-case lords of the new church.

Mocking rock star conceit provides ready, crowd-pleasing material (see *This is Spinal Tap*). However, Bangs, though pessimistic to the point of occasional fatalism, wasn't a nihilist. He impressed upon me that irreverence contained reverence. It was *because* we loved these things so much that we questioned them so closely. You needed to keep a check on your passion so you might see clearly...and guard your heart from the disappointment that often comes from worshiping mere people. With the adulation of millions, your herces may forget they're human, but don't you dare make that mistake. Take the work seriously, not yourselves.

There is more to say about *Creem* than Bangs's writing. He was, however, the dominant, defining voice. The magazine was somebody else's band, but Lester was the star writer, arranger, and player. He wrote features, record reviews, photo captions, and replies to readers' letters. His attitude pervaded the magazine. That attitude extended to design issues. Many of these things I feel are lessons to the designer, though more subtle than discussing layout approaches.

One idea is how every aspect of the magazine could be up for reinterpretation. Like photo captions. Bangs labeled snaps of rockers and amplified whatever buffoonery or falsity (real or imagined) he found there with a choice inscription. Here was text and image playing off each other, reinforcing and recontextualizing each other. Many of those pix were nondescript but Lester found something to focus on and remix. For me, this was instruction on how the radical could lurk in the mundane. A photo caption could cut deeper than a novel.

There was pastiche: the regular "Boy Howdy profile" that lampooned the Dewar's ads and the stars who consented to clutch the Boy Howdy can. To this day, I don't know if Boy Howdy was a real drink. I expect to hear someday that its name was a smirking Detroit reference to something (what else?) sexual. The ad went beyond parody by engaging the musicians in the process of their defaming.

When regarded in standard formal terms, there isn't much — if anything — to value in *Creem*'s pages. The layout was of the slap-it-down/move-it-out school. Garish color cover with tubular-phallic logo, B&w newsprint pages, lots of Souvenir. There were, however, touches that broke down an off-the-shelf design.

Creem had a table of contents and departments but wasn't very strict about organization. Record reviews seemed to sprout up everywhere. You thought Lester's opinions were crap? Well then, just flip back to Christgau's "Rock-O-Rama" for his capsule ratings. It could all be rather free-form. Close enough for jazz — or rock-n-roll. Deliberate deconstruction or deadline pressure? Surely the latter but it ends up the same. Creem's look was consistent with rock-n-roll in the 70s and its place within the system. Professional but loose.

A steady dosing of irreverence was in order for rock. The music was barely into its twenties and already showing early onset of Alzheimer's. Corporate rock was suiting up.

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Rather than fighting the power, our rebel angels were stroking the gabardine. Rolling Stone was still a must-read though developing a high fawning factor. Hit Parader? Please. Billboard? That's Martin Venezky's gig. Creem was the garage band of music magazines. They practiced but occasionally wandered from the arrangement. They were as tight as they needed to be to get your attention.

Bangs left Greem and freelanced for a variety of journals. I found him in Grawdaddy, a smarter, mature Greem (sounds like an oxymoron), and read it regularly until it folded. Musician magazine arose and there was Bangs — continuing his support for the misunderstood, unappreciated genius — with a definitive profile of Brian Eno. My visits to the newsstands became a Where's Lester? search through everything music-related. And then, in 1982, the news came of his accidental death. Somewhere along the line, Greem died too.

A few years ago, Creem reappeared with Marvin Jarrett as editor and Gary Kæpke as designer. I got a small thrill at seeing it transformed and on the newsstand again. The short-lived new Creem looked much better but was, ultimately, just another 90s music magazine. It was like a band reforming to capitalize on nostalgia. I realized that brief thrill was my subconscious thinking Lester had come to life again. But he hadn't. I put the first issue down and never looked again. Jarrett moved on from the former land of Bangs — pushing the envelope of magazine writing—to start Ray Gun, land of Carson and...you know the rest.

I miss Lester and wish he were writing today. And I wonder how his words would look on the pages of today's magazines. We know how those Ray Gun texts are never as challenging as their designs. The authors are frequently Lester Bangs wanna-be's, commanding only a single shot from his devastating arsenal. I fantasize? rationalize? that Lester would be hip to these aggressive design approaches and attempt to drive them further. He'd blaze outrageous words for the trailblazing treatments! This unreasonable guide to horrible noise wrote (to quote The New York Times) "...in gusts and swirls and pratfalls...." The variegated typography of Carson or Venezky might well suit Lester's many moods.

And while I'd enjoy seeing some of Bangs' past words reinterpreted this way, I don't think *Creem* would have been "improved" any by a "better" design. I suppose what I read into *Creem* (and had reinforced by other influences) was the hidden, subversive power of the ordinary. It isn't always the wild, experimental things that inspire. And thinking of this is where I stumbled across why I really selected *Creem* magazine. It was the high school magazine I worked on and entirely forgot.

In my senior year, a couple of friends and I, plus a rogue faculty advisor (a math teacher), turned our moribund Haverhill High School newspaper (*The Brown and Gold*) into a magazine. Our serious reporting mixed equally with Monty Pythonish gags. It was, in a word, irreverent. Qualitatively, it wasn't so far from *Creem* — a national magazine. I noticed this. Given the opportunity, anything might be possible. It was my first published writing and designing. Looking back, I was in my element and can only wonder why it took so long to get back.

When it came time to choose the after high school direction, I was presented with a Choice. I could write words or arrange them on a page. For me, separating these pursuits was

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like splitting twins joined at the head. I sought someplace where this condition looked good — or was no odder than anything else you'd see. It was more fun to hang around the Art Department than the English. And a "commercial art" career looked, at best, stultifying.

Later, as an undergrad in art school, I voiced the conceit that I would someday publish the Creem magazine of the art/culture world. Big talk from a Ceramics major. I'd champion the neglected, expose hypocrisy, deflate pretension, and generally wallow in my love/hate relationship with the creative process and its processors. That particular theme got side-tracked but the desire to do-it-myself obviously hasn't. Most days, my fantasies are modest. I imagine the blurb now: America's best writer reviews for an obscure design magazine! You laugh, but stranger things have happened...though I can't think of any.

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I wouldn't argue that I read a lot into Creem magazine. Perhaps the reading into process is what's most important. I could throw those old copies of Creem away because I had internalized the attitude, the understanding. That's the true magazine. I say the same for these rarer, carefully conserved journals in my collection. What is being saved when we preserve these artifacts? Isn't it all personal? Maybe it would be better if all this printed matter decomposed more quickly. Monthlies evaporate after 31 days. Time would really be history after a fortnight. Emigre — gone south with the next turn of season! What would our design be like if printed with secret agent fading inks? We'd be left with our memories. Maybe we then would see a real plethora of approaches. Or the wheel constantly reinvented...if we're not there already. There's plenty of work I wish would fade away — mine at the top of the list.

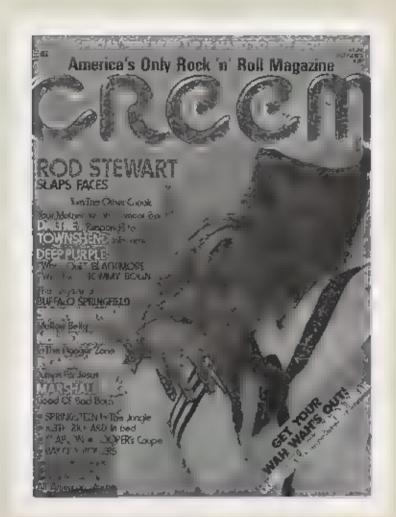
What makes us hold onto these things is aura. Aura is an object's ineffable attraction beyond its physical qualities—its history, pedigree, associations, reputation. You never know where it adheres and why. This is a real concern for designers, who usually labor to generate aura through formal means. The reading into concept drives most of them nuts. You can't specify it. Like Robert Pirsig's Quality (and perhaps they're the same creature). I think there's an aura event apart from the producer and the produced. Some people have the receivers in their heads; when tuned to the right frequency they pick it up.

It's a mystery what will inspire people. Adventures close to home may be just as exciting as travels at the edge. I really don't know how you deal with it other than acceptance. And keep working.

Today, I see the spirit of Lester Bangs and *Creem* scattered throughout hundreds of zines and small magazines. It's why I'll pick up *anything*, look at it and read it. Every so often, something strums that chord—the words, the look, the 'tude—and I add it to the collection.

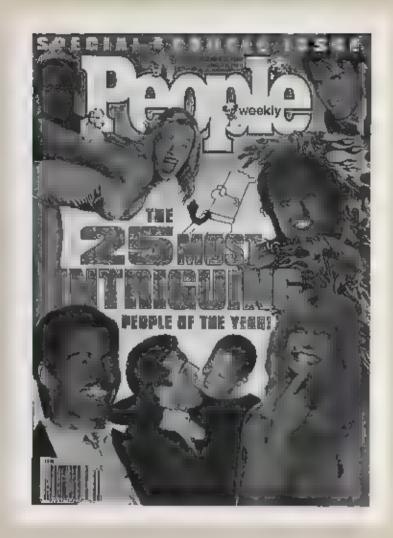
You can tell - and you never can tell.





Creem, November. 1975
Editor: Wayne Robins
Art Director: Charles Auringer

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People, December 30, 1996
Editor in Chief Norman Pearlstine
Art Director: John Shecut Jr

# EVERYDAY PEOPLE PLAY

ACT I, SCENE I

{1996: Curtain opens on a therapist's office furnished with contemporary leather sofa, armchair, potted plants, desk, table, bookcase. Enter DR. E. and LINDA stage left, talking, taking their respective seats. They are both familiar with the routine.}

DR. E.: Sorry to keep you waiting.

LINDA: S'okay. I was distracted by that "Best and Worst Dressed" bit in *People* magazine. It really kills me. What's wrong with Dennis Rodman dressing in earrings and hot pants? He's only doing it to buy press, like Madonna.

DR. E.: Madonna is a woman.

LINDA: Madonna's a celebrity. One of the more interesting ones, I'd say.

DR. E.: (Nods silently)

LINDA: But maybe they're so interesting that they're boring. Full circle, you know? Then again, everything's boring. The best dressed are understated boring, with a designer label. Hyperbolic boring is better.

DR. E.: What do you mean by "hyperbolic boring?"

LINDA: Extravaganza! Like Steven Segal's style, dressing to look like a magic carpet. If you're going to be boring, you might as well do it interestingly...

DR. E.: Then your style must fall in the "understated boring" category.

LINDA: It does. I guess I'm not looking for the kind of attention hyperboring receives. People might truly expect me to be interesting.

DR. E.: I doubt it. But don't you feel interesting, in any case?

LINDA: I just don't want people to expect it.

DR. E.: I see. What might happen if you didn't live up to this expectation?

LINDA: I guess I fear they'd leave, go talk to somebody else. Or they'd figure out I was just looking for attention.

DR. E.: Attention is to be avoided then?

guess. A massive celebrity system says it's good. Here I am paying for your undivided attention. Reminds me of...when I was eleven we were living in a small town, the place I mentioned to you not too long ago... (Music comes up faintly, gets louder, finally drowns out LINDA's monologue. The lights fade simultaneously until the characters are silhouetted — LINDA talking and pacing, DR. E. nodding — against a projected backdrop of scenes between a young girl's super-ego and id (played by the Olsen Twins) and her mother (played by Glenn Close). They act out Linda's minor humiliations: A junior high speech, a piano recital, an ill-fitting hand-me-down, etc. It ends with the Olsen twins crying. Lights come up, music stops.)

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DR. E.: I'm afraid our time is up.

LINDA: (Wiping her eyes with tissue.) Right. Okay. (She heads for the door, hesitates, looks back)
Can I borrow that People magazine?

DR. E.: Certainly.

(Stage goes black as the door shuts.)

from THE INSIDE TRACT Deborah Griffin New York Times, May 2, 1985 "I was serving on a committee to produce a promotional brochure for the university, and we were meeting with a design consultancy team. At one point, an art director advised that we feature students prominently in the brochure because, he said, 'People are like dogs. When dogs find each other, they stop whatever they're up to, charge one another and start sniffing away. I'm telling you, using people is a sure-fire strategy for attracting an audience.'"

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from I Want My Envy Please Deborah Griffin 1988, Simon & Schuster "The theater of infotainment has been with us always: stained glass, town criers, crime fiction, store windows. It was here in 1976, the splendiferous Bicentennial year. The year Rocky won the Oscar for best picture. Peter Finch and Faye Dunaway took the best actor awards for their performances in Network, the apocalyptic satire in which an erstwhile news anchor voices America's unnamed frustration with the cry 'I'm mad as hell and I'm not going to take it anymore!' People magazine had covered two Academy Award ceremonies already... Clearly, the age of infotainment had found momentum, gearing up for its current hyper-speed and targeting an unprecedented number of viewers."

ACT I, SCENE 2

{1984: Curtain opens on an office with contemporary leather sofa, armchair, potted plants, table, desk, etc. People covers are framed and hanging around the room. PAUL holds a clipboard and is seated behind the desk facing MITCHELL.}

PAUL: So, "Mitchell" is it?

MITCHELL: Yes, Mitchell.

PAUL: Thank you for taking the time for our survey, Mitchell. Now. Just answer as quickly and as briefly as you can. Are you ready?

мітсныц: Ready.

PAUL: Okay. How did you find out about this survey?

MITCHELL: In your magazine.

PAUL: {Making a check mark on the clipboard.} What made you decide to participate?

MITCHELL: The special edition bound book of special People issues.

PAUL: Not the tote bag?

MITCHELL: Yes. I mean no.

PAUL: How did you decide on an occupation, Mitchell?

MITCHELL: Someone suggested I study art because I was pretty good at drawing.

PAUL: And did you attend college to study art?

MITCHELL: Yes.

PAUL: How did you decide on which college to attend?

MITCHELL: It was near my house.

PAUL: Do you know who the most intriguing people are?

MITCHELL: Yes.

PAUL: Do you subscribe to any magazines?

MITCHELL: Yes.

PAUL: Which ones?

MITCHELL: Yours. And U.S. News and World Report.

PAUL: (Writing on the clipboard) Are you married?

MITCHELL: Metropolitan Home.

PAUL: Pardon?

MITCHELL: My wife. She subscribes to Met Home.

PAUL: (Makes a check mark) Married. How did you decide to marry your wife?

MITCHELL: She asked me.

PAUL: Do you know who the most fascinating women are?

MITCHELL: Yes.

PAUL: Do you know who our villains are?

MITCHELL: Yes.

PAUL: How did you decide what car to drive?

MITCHELL: Yes. Oops. Sorry. Ads.

PAUL: That's it, Mitchell. Thanks for coming in.

MITCHELL: That's it?

PAUL: That's it. You can pick up your tote bag at the reception desk.

MITCHELL: Book.

PAUL: Sorry. Your book. Thanks again.

MITCHELL: Anytime.

(Lights cut to black.)

from THE INSIDE TRACT Deborah Griffin New York Times, Jan. 13, 1992 "People, like all magazines of its type, stages information to suggest we are peering through windows, acting as witness, jury and judge to the acts of real people, herœs and psychopaths... It isn't true that some of us are outside of it and some are mired in it. Nor is it entirely true that we are all made of it. I propose that we each are above it, cruising about on a remote control box, feet tap-tap-tapping upon a scene changer. Are we looking for somewhere to alight? Perhaps some are. But most of us aren't. Where would we land, with so much else to see?"

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(1973: Curtain opens on a living room with contemporary leather sofa, armchair, potted plants, etc. Enter SAMANTHA stage left, sifting through mail. Seeing one envelope, she walks excitedly to the middle of the room and sits on the floor, pulling out its contents. A video camera is focused on her activity from above and is shown to the audience on two large-screen televisions at both ends of the stage.)

[Video pov: On the floor is a magazine subscription packet that includes a sheet of postage-sized stamps — each stamp is a miniature magazine cover. Samantha carefully pulls apart the stamps and sorts through them, setting some aside, arranging, rearranging. Every moment of this tedious process needs to be taped. The actor should adlib monologue:

samantha: Seventeen...Definitely Glamour. Hmmm...Psychology Today would be interesting...Rolling Stone for sure... two left. Time possibly. Good Housekeeping...no no no. Maybe. Life. Popular Mechanics?... A set of five is finally set aside. Alternates sit nearby.]

SAMANTHA: (Pausing to consider her choices) Only five. How can anybody decide with only five...

MOTHER: (Enter stage left) Hey, I said I'm home!

SAMANTHA: (Not looking up) Sorry Mom. Didn't hear you. How was work?

MOTHER: (Removing her coat) Horrific. What are you up to?

SAMANTHA: I'm choosing magazines. A subscription thingy came in...

мотнек: Oh no you don't.

samantha: I'm just pretending to order. Man!

мотнев: You're daydreaming when there's a dishwasher full of dishes in that kitchen...and I suppose your homework is done?

SAMANTHA: I'll do it later! MAN!

MOTHER: I really don't understand you, Sam. Why do you like those damn things so much? You do it with record offers, the book club, and you don't even read books as far as I can tell! (Heading for the door) I'm taking a bath and when I get out, I'd better find you working on something constructive like your homework or, better yet, dinner. (Exit)

SAMANTHA: {Mocking} I'm taking a bath... (She stands, moves to front center, addresses the audience.) I hope she drowns. {Walking the stage} She orders five different lipsticks from Avon every two months and she doesn't understand. Come to think of it, though, the colors are always kinda peach, kinda pink, kinda ruby red. Everything's the same for her. She comes and goes. Says the same things. Does the same things. She's so boring. (John Lennon's Imagine cues up. She sways to the music.) One time I picked Boy's Life, MotorTrend, Sports Illustrated...um... Esquire and Playboy. ("Imagine all the people, living for today...") Another time it was Cosmopolitan, Caterer, Colliers, Craft and Christian Life. Tonight it seemed harder to choose. I'm just not sure who I am lately. My best friend Valerie says it's because we're at the end of high school; at the end of childhood...on the threshold of adulthood...about to launch into the wide world where everything will change forever. ("People say I'm a dreamer, but I'm not the only one...") She's probably right.. ("I hope some-d-a-a-a-yyou'll join us, and the world will live as one...") Man...

(Spotlight cuts.)

着 16 紫

from Welcome to the Web
I Mean the Net.
That Thing I'm Tangled In
Deborah Griffin
New York Times, July 15, 1995

"The task of the infotainment architect/engineer/designer is to inspire desire. And desire is inspired primarily by boredom. We suspend boredom through motion. Any small movement that leads us from boredom to desire is acceptable. Television moves. Magazines move, faster than books, but books move too. The Internet moves – we don't read or look at the web, we surf it... What we have in all media is acute efficiency of movement. Generic boredom is instantly supplanted by desirous boredom." "Boredom is a byproduct of the things we make, the things that save us time. Then we make things to fill the time we save. Things that amuse, inform, mystify, delight. Things that fill our eyes, ears, hands, noses, mouths in order to occupy our minds and souls. The act of filling is what's important here...

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## ACT II, SCENE 1

{1996: Curtain opens on a living room with contemporary leather sofa, etc. Books and papers are stacked and strewn everywhere. Enter JIM and SUSAN stage left, talking. JIM sits, points to the magazine he sees on the coffee table}

JIM: Where did that come from?

SUSAN: (Pouring two glasses of wine) It's Linda's.

JIM: (Picking up the magazine) People magazine?

susan: She's our guest. Be nice.

ли: She reads this tripe?

susan: It's INTeresting...

JIM: {mocking} What's so INTeresting about it?

SUSAN: (handing a glass to JIM, she takes the magazine from him, sits and leafs through it) Well, it's harmless entertainment, anyway. (continues to scan the pages) See, here's a piece about how much sitcom stars make...

jim: {picking up a nearby book} How very INTeresting

SUSAN: There's other stuff in here. Look, they have book reviews...

(A long silence ensues while JIM and SUSAN read.)

susan: Here's something interesting. A writer in New York couldn't get her work published, so she tacked up her stories on the street, like posters. That worked, but it was risky, so she started a web site, which she says is "the equivalent of...

LINDA: (off stage) Anybody home?

SUSAN: (Yelling toward the door) We're in here. (To JIM, continuing) "...the equivalent of the neighborhood lamppost." She now has over 1,000 new visitors a week and fans have translated her work into three other languages.

LINDA: (entering through the door) Hullo! (gestures to the wine bottle) May I?

susan: Help yourself. We were just looking through your magazine.

им: We?

susan: Well, I was. It's beneath Mr. Intellectual here.

LINDA: {pouring} I brought that with me to read on the plane. I figured since I was coming to California I should bone up on my celebrities. (Laughs, moves toward JIM)

лм: You're in Berkeley, Linda, not Hollywood.

LINDA: (Refreshing JIM's glass) True. But you're a lot closer to them than I am in Denver.

JIM: These people, and everydamnbody else in the world, are your neighbors already. Just open the cover of that magazine. There they are, ready to lend you a cup of sugar.

susan: Ignore him.

{A doorbell rings that sounds like a soundstage bell. The lights dim, a spotlight hits the front door. It flies open to Demi and Bruce throwing sugar packets like confetti. They walk upstage, waving, followed by a parade of celebrities: Rosie and Madonna, Spike, Ron and Tom, McCauley, Whitney, Mel, Cindy, Lili, Mick, etc.\* They each pause at the door, toss sugar packets to resounding applause, walk on and off. When the last exits, cheering subsides and lights go up.}

LINDA: (Reading from the magazine) "... If fevered excitement can be captured...

JIM: (Big, loud yawn.)

LINDA: "...expect magic."

\*Note to Producer: Any celebrity will do -- wheever happens to be in town for the night.

from THEATRICON

Deborah Griffin

Thesbian Quarterly, Spring, 1996

"The playbill [for Everyday People Play] contains an interview with the playwright. He zealously describes looking at People magazine when the thought struck him that it 'is a moveable theater with a walk-on cast of thousands – an inexhaustible pool of celebrity waits in the wings.' Later, his stage transmogrifies: 'The pages spread out on my lap like a television screen...and I had control of the pause button.' "This detail incensed Los Angeles Times theater critic James W. Pershing. It became fodder for his June 12, 1992, review: 'According to Everyday People Play's dubious playwright, theater, television and magazines are one in the same, just as hair dryers, tape recorders and coffee makers are, I

that would point out how to exit this artless, Sisyphean hell...'
His review continues spewing venom to the last line.
"Why, then, does the production continue to play to packed houses, despite this and other brutal criticism? What Pershing and his fellow critics failed to understand is the value (and the economy) of boredom. All media is driven by it, a point the playwright unwittingly hit upon. I believe it to be the basis for

"The production yields nothing useful other than the idea of usefulness. Un-information, so to speak. Like the popular sitcom I've been consulting on recently that has a reputation for creating scenarios about absolutely nothing. I landed the project because during my interview I mentioned that I don't really want information. What would I do with it once I got it?"

第19第

## ACT 11, SCENE 2 (FINALE)

(2000: Curtain opens on a small hotel lobby with contemporary leather sofa, etc. People enter and exit idly. Enter LINDA and SUSAN stage left, sipping from martini glasses and talking. They sit facing each other.)

susan: Doesn't it horrify you?

LINDA: Not really. It's just what we do.

SUSAN Haven't you ever wanted to do something more important?

the play's tremendous appeal...

LINDA. Like what?

susan: I don't know. Discover a vaccine or something.

LINDA: I failed chemistry twice. Remember?

SUSAN: Ha! I do remember. You preferred the cafe to the chem lab.

LINDA: Like chemistry, it was something to do.

SUSAN: Hmm. (picks up People from a stack on the table) Will this thing never die?

LINDA: (Laughing) I hope not.

SUSAN: Gives us something to be ironic about?

LINDA: Name me something that doesn't. Actually, I like it. After all, it is about us.

SUSAN. No...Us is about us.

LINDA: Us is about them. People is about you and me.

SUSAN: Well then, what about that magazine Real People? Who's that about?

LINDA: Boring people?

SUSAN: {Laughing,} Not us, obviously.

LINDA: Obviously.

SUSAN: {Puts the magazine down, picks up a newspaper, leafs through it.} Want to see a movie?

LINDA: Sure. What's showing?

SUSAN: I don't believe it. Look at this...that play...Everyday People Play...it's still running.

LINDA: Still? When did we see that?

susan: It has to have been years and years now. Let's go again.

LINDA: You're joking.

SUSAN: No, really. Come on. It'll be fun. There aren't any interesting movies out anyway.

LINDA: Yeah, okay. But let's walk. I feel like walking.

SUSAN: Good idea.

(The lights fade as they walk to the wings and pull two treadmills to a spotlight at center stage. Facing each other, they get on and walk, looking around like tourists. Projected against a backdrop is film footage of urban boulevards, country roads, suburban streets, the kind used in movies behind people driving. Offstage the entire cast sings Sly and the Family Stone's Everyday People while they walk onstage to form a circle around SUSAN and LINDA. The cast joins hands, singing: "I-I-I, am everyday people, yeah yeah...I am no better, and neither are you...we are the same whatever we do..." and so on and so on...)

(Curtain closes slowly on the singing cast.)

THE END

from 1994 FROM UP HERE Debarah Griffin People magazine, December 23, 1996

第20 %

"An advertisement for HBO is currently airing a spot that uses a travel metaphor. The tag line is 'It's your journey. We just make the arrangements.' The point-of-view of the imagery is somewhere high above the earth, suggesting that I can go anywhere I wish, from around the world to behind the scenes... "Back on earth, New Year's Eve is fast approaching and I'll be hosting my traditional midnight-four-alarm-fire-chili party. Usually my guests and I watch Dick Clark drop the big ball on Times Square. But this year I may defy tradition by suggesting we watch 'Sinbad's Dynamite New Year's Eve." According to the promotion, a mammoth Las Vegas hotel/casino will implode at the stroke of midnight. New Year's Independence Day in Las Vegas! But I wouldn't want to lose tradition entirely. Someone will still read from the 'Most Intriguing People of 1996' list. We'll still share our resolutions and joke about how interesting it is that none of us followed through on last year's promises..."



第21章

People, December 23, 1996
Editor in Chief Norman Pearletine
Art Director: John Shecut Jr

\* P \* REVIEW

# THE NEWS

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In 2030, the cultural engagement group Ephemeral States returns to its roots. In the wake of its first tera-hit experiential work — the critically acclaimed Bubble Chamber Music — the anonymous four member collaborative feels a need to retrench. Known for its almost academic obsession with obsolete and archaic media, it stuns critics and audience alike by announcing an intent to produce a printed hard-copy magazine as its next release. ES will employ period "desk-top publishing" technology to produce, and offset lithography to print, the work. The project will be both a homage to and commentary on the printed medium, along with its producers and consumers.

Ephemeral States will take as models the magazines of the 1990s, when the form was arguably at its peak. This is regarded as an absurd endeavor, as the medium is past moribund. The last mass circulation magazine went virtual in 2012. The reading-inclined subscribe to WaxPaper — a single sheet artifact that "turns pages" when its surface tension is disturbed. Printing has become technologically and economically unfeasible. Paper is a rare commodity though trees are plentiful. Offset printing is now a little-used, quaint "artisticraft" process long made obsolete by the Net. Massive web presses are rusting scrap, beyond artists' or enthusiasts' means to maintain. Attempts to locate 1990-era desk-top publishing equipment lead to museums and landfills.

In its search for the materials necessary to complete the project, Ephemeral States stumble across a 70-year-old eccentric living in the desert. He has preserved samples of the production and printing technology of the time. The group adopt him as mentor after learning he briefly appeared in the fringe art/design literature of the 90's. His rambling reminiscences and disorganized mass of scrapbooks, art-work, and sundry printed ephemera are valued as resources and inspiration for the magazine.

The group is hampered by problems common to all re-creators of historical artifacts, however sincere and intelligent. Foremost, it is nearly impossible for ES to subsume its 2030 sensibility. Representations that would have been unacceptable to a 1990s audience are employed freely. Furthermore, while heavily documented, the decade was a dynamic interplay of forces impossible to recreate except as sty listic forms. Many subtleties evade the group. Diverse publications are blended and distorted: mass-market slick and one-off 'zine blur together. Formal aspects dictated by economic necessities are interpreted as fashion statements.

Advertisements are seen as editorial content; editorial content is considered distraction. What's more, the project's conceptual underpinning is a revisitation of Post-Modernist attitudes, whose nostalgic pining for authenticity and dependable truth seems touching now. Succeeding Marginalist and Neo-Marginalist movements themselves give way to the Next Big Thing.

The mentor's opinions are also dubious, due to his disavowal of having "objective" status — and his suspect memory. His interpretations often strain credulity, as he insists many puzzling stylistic features were grounded in personal expression or an "optical ergonomics."

In its view of magazines, Ephemeral States locate commercialism as the defining and all-encompassing force. Every magazine is selling something on both broad and narrow bands. While books might have claimed to be printed information storage and retrieval systems, magazines were sociœconomic freeze-frames. Their primary purpose was to package consumers for advertisers. ES's research into the history of the magazine shows that it was first an advertising tool, created to market products. The terms "magazine" and "catalog" are interchangeable. Differences are only a matter of degree, not substance.

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The group holds this opinion without judgment.

Period debates about the influence and desirability of marketplace influence amuse it. Separating "advertising" content from "editorial" is like distinguishing "nature" from "culture." The *National Review* is, for ES, the ultimate magazine, as it promotes the theoretical rationale of capitalist society. Formally, ES feels the most successful magazines are those with the most advertising content. The density and clutter of these publications determine the medium.

Ephemeral States sees magazines as a whole – individually and as a genre. It is perplexed by design surveys that only feature spreads devoid of advertising. How can you celebrate the denial of the principal function?

Rather than being forced collaborations between magazine and advertising designers, ES appreciates magazines as a continuous "Exquisite Corpse" exercise, where participants contribute unaware of each other's content.

Overall, individual publications are regarded as segments of a "meta magazine" comprising the entire newsstand. These concerns shape the project, though agreement is not unanimous within the group on how to represent them. How far does ES pursue a recreation or an ideal? There must also be an awareness of the interests and habits of the 2030 audience. Can—and should—a virtual reality experience be represented, or suggested, on a printed page?

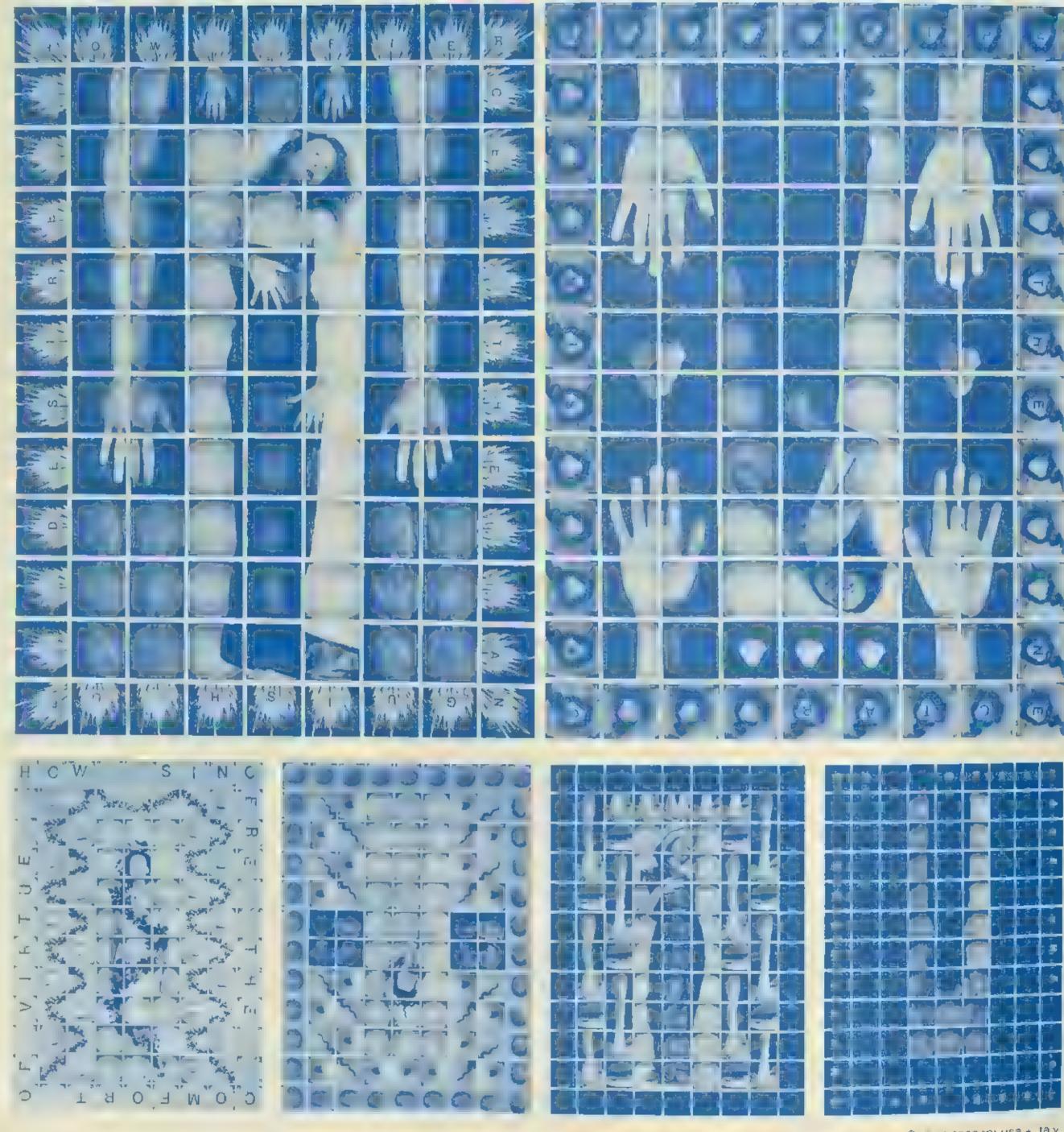
The group teams up in pairs, resurrecting traditional functions such as "writer," "designer," and "editor." Disputes increase the more ES enforces strict adherence to these discrete roles. Arguments and sabotage become common. As Ephemeral States explores the differing ideas of community contained within magazines, its own four member cooperative begins to fracture.

The project is beset by mechanical difficulties restoring and mastering the antiquated technology. Frustrating concessions and bizarre innovations are made by turns. Eventually, after innumerable delays, astronomical cost overruns, creative differences that eventually split the group, and the scrutiny of a skeptical yet eagerly awaiting public, The News of the Whirled makes its debut...

(Thanks to John McVey for his suggestions.)

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# WHAT I KNOW

This is not a dew world, our bodies are flavor

> familiar as milk of bre The first words we si

or words...with eyes just open,

vour skin never closer, I hear what I know: our names,

sometimes in the voice of the woman who married us.

and music from the evening we met.

made dis dance:

What I know isn't assecret.

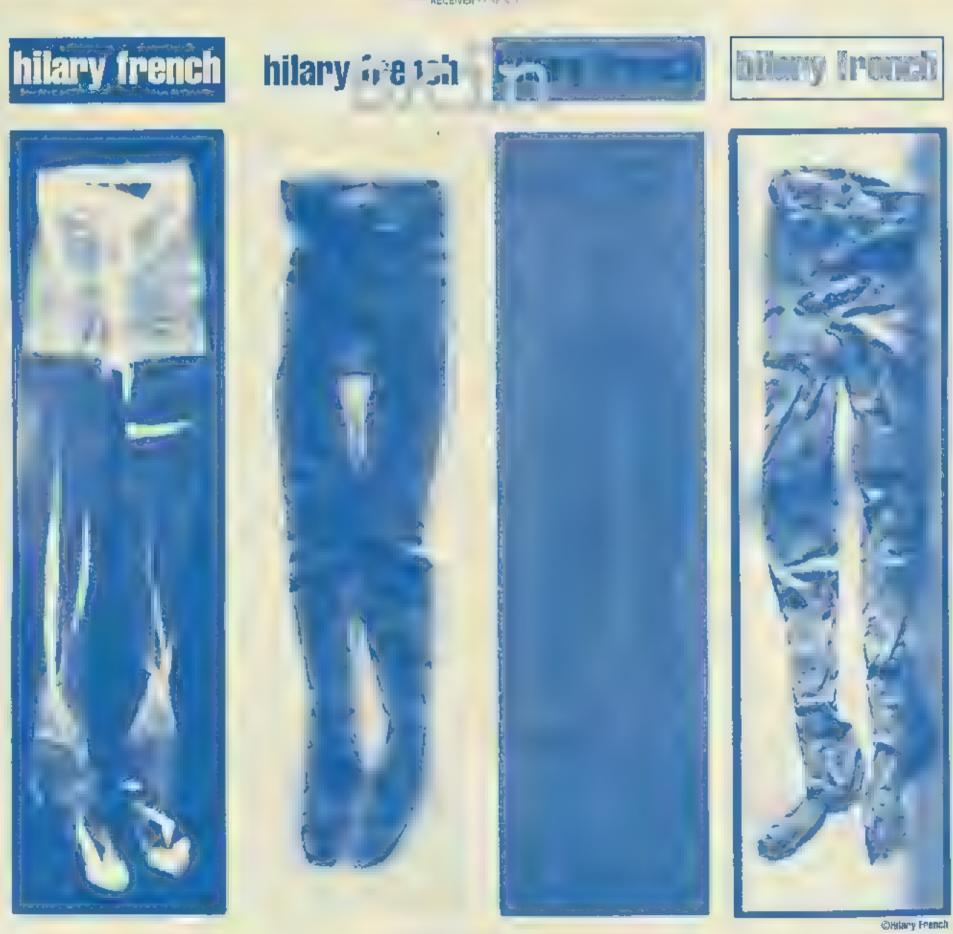
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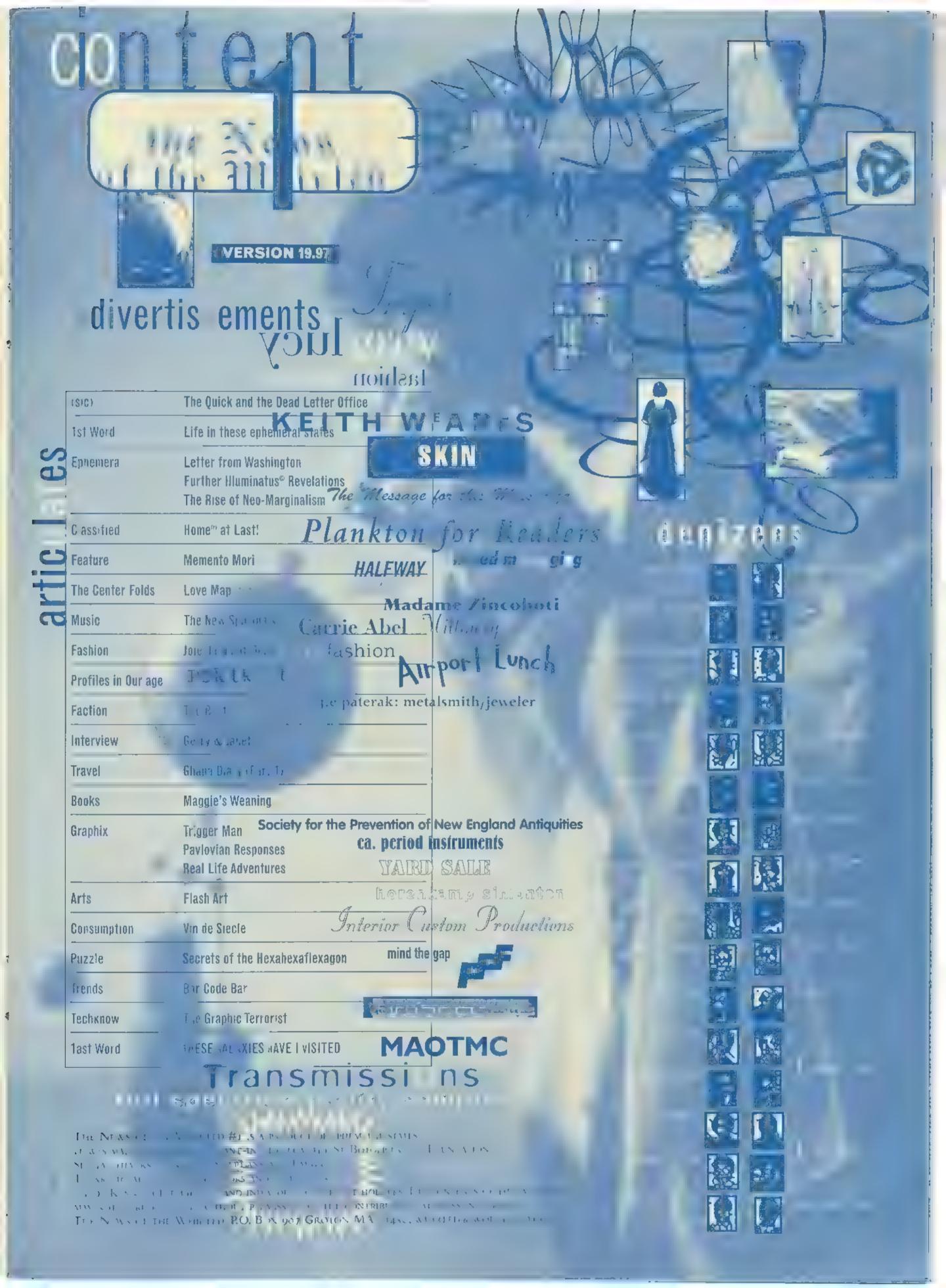
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PLANKS, A LOST BALUSTRADEL A TREE HOLD BACK THE MAIL INTIL A CERTAIN LIMB. ALL NAILED TOGETHER HAPHAZARD - AMOUNT WAS REACHED. IT WOULD THEN BE RELEASED IN A TORRENT. IT WAS Y BY THE EMPLOYEE LEAST SKILLED AT DISCOVERED THAT THE DEAD LETTER OFFICERS DESIRED BEING CAJGET UNDER THIS AVALANCHE. IN FACT, THEY GATHERED UNDER THE HATCH WHEN A DROP CARPENTRY. A ROPED RAILING WAS FOR MANY. VEARS, ADVANCED, 100 ADVANCED IHOJGHT SOME WORKERS, OSTENJATION' THEY SURREPTITIOUSLY CUT THE LINES, SEEMED IMMINENT, AND WOSTLED FOR WITH THEIR GOVERNMENT ISSUE LILLI-TY KNIVES, WITH BLADES KEPT WILL HONED FOR DISCREETLY SCICING OPEN CURIOUS AND SUSPICIOUS PACKAGES, TO REPAIR THE SABOTAGE. THE ROPES MANY PASSED THROJGH WOJLD MAVE TO BE KNOTTED TOGETHER OFFICE DAILY-BUT & N. AGAIN AND AGAIN. WITH EACH RE TYING THE LINES GREW SHORTER. THE WOOD LPRIGHTS BOWED INWARD AT THE TOP UNTIL THE BARRIER RESEMBLED AN OPEN-FACED FOJR-SIDED PYRAMID. MAIL WAS PUSHED THROUGH THE OPEN SIDES. BJT A VIEW WAS STILL OFFERED OF THE ROOM BELOW. WHEN OUT OF MIND BECAME AN ACTUAL PHOBIA OUT OF-SIGHT BECAME ESSENTIAL. THE PRACTICE OF PROVIDING THE DEAD ETTER OFFICES WITH NO ARTIFICIAL LIGHT-ONG AFTER ELECTRIFICATION-COJLD ONLY GO ON SO LONG . THE NATURAL LIGHT WAS MISER-LY, COMING IN FROM-NARROW DIRTY WINDOWS AT STREET LEVEL, FREQUENTLY THE PANES WERE BARRED OR GRATED AND NOT ONLY TO KPEP OUTSIDERS OUT. JSUALLY THOUGH, THE WINDOWS - WERE. SET BELDW GROJND - LVEL AT THE TOM OF SMALL CONCRETE SHAFTS: IT I PITS SOON PROVED TO BE THE MAIL AL HABITAT AND BREEDING GO TO WATER THAT NEVER SEEMED TO VA ING FROM THE DEAD LETTER OF FICE (CST SOMEROW TO THE MAP) MAY TO THE WORKERS INTON AND WAS A ST TECH. SIZABLE SEGMENT OF A MEMORIA TIP TO HOW THE SYSTEM WAS THAT WAS FOR THE MOST CORE AT TO THE MOST CORE AT TO THE MOST CORE AT THE TOP SIMPLE DELIVERY CORESTELLED WAS THE CHIA TOTAL AND IN THE SEST FLORESCENTS AVAILABLE. AND IN THE SOCIETALINESS THE CHIA TOTAL AND IN THE SECOND THE DELIVERY CORESTELLS. ING GLARE THE DIAD LI FFE NAT GLOW THE LIGHTS DELY TO TO THE MASS OF BONE WITE ENVILLED WAS ADMIRED. THEY COMBRAT! AT THE ROLL OF THE PROBLE OF BROJGHT THEM THESE FLINKERS AND SPASMODIC STROBE-TJBES. THE LIGHTS GLOWED RED-ORANGE AT THE SOMEWHERE ELSE, BEYOND THE BOJND MUCH TRUTH TO BE BURNE AND REALINE FINDS. AND SEEMED TO ALWAYS BE ON ARIES, OJISIDE THEY TOSS THESE STONE TABLETS AND A MOLNJAINTOP THE VERGE OF KICKING OFF. INSTEAD LETTERS INTO WIDE, WHEELED CANVAS WHERE NONE IS AVAILABLE. LETTERS OF FLARING OLT IN A SJPERNOVA BLAZE BINS BEARING LARGE QUESTION MARKS HAT ARE MADNESS OF A KIND THAT OF MEDIOCRITY. THEY WENT ON FOR STENCILED ON THE SIDES THESE BINS OLESTIONS SANITY AS YOU. TRY TO COMMON WAS PEAK PERFORMANCE. THE FLITTER THE OLTER SORIES. PLZZE OLT THE SOMEONE TO THESE THOUGHTS? HOW ING. FAKING BEING, OFF, JO. GET YOUR SMALL MYSTERIES: EXOTIC SPELLINGS. COULD A MIND FORM THESE IDEAS? HOW ING. FAKING BEING OF THIS TIME IT'S TRANSPOSED NUMBERS. OMITTED LAST. CAN THE WORLD I LIVE IN DALLY BE THE GJARD DOWN, SJRELY THIS TIME IT'S TRANSPOSED NUMBERS. USING TOOLS SAME ONE DESCRIBED HERE IN THIS HAD IT. THEN BLINKING IKE WAKING: NAMES, BLIRRED INKS. USING TOOLS SAME ONE DESCRIBED HERE IN THIS HAD IT. THEN BLINKING IKE WAKING: NAMES, BLIRRED INKS. USING TOOLS SAME ONE DESCRIBED HERE IN THIS HAD IT. THEN BLINKING IKE WAKING: NAMES, BLIRRED INKS. USING TOOLS SAME ONE DESCRIBED HERE IN THIS HAD IT. THEN BLINKING IKE WAKING: NAMES, BLIRRED INKS. USING TOOLS SAME ONE DESCRIBED HERE IN THIS THE LIGHTS GLOWED RED-ORANGE AT THE HA HA FOOLED YOU COMING TO FEEBLE

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FIAT AR' WELL TIL ALACOES PITERS 1 1 AS T S OF 

THOUGH

WHOLE, TO GIVE
THEM LIVE LETTERS , 1A LAV. MUCH TRUTH TO BE BORNE AND REQUIRE MANNER? THEY MUST BE ONE WORLD, HOW COLLD THERE BE TWO? IF YOU ADMIT TO TWO: YOU MUST - ADMIN - T-Q -AN INFINITY THERE ARE LETTERS WHICH ARE BOTTLE -LESS MESSAGES JETSAMMED LONG AGO, TO WASH ASHORE WHERE THEY MAY. AND THERE ARE THE LETTERS THAT ARE SIM

PLY HOPE. WRITTEN FOR THE TRUNKPANDORA'S MAIL BUX-WHERE OPENING
AND READING IS'NOT WHAT MAPPERS.

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# You can imagine as to why

My father, [omitted] is owner of [omitted], is involved with the Mafia, syndicated criminal organization. U

His people have been following me for several years now and are using an implement on me that is destroying my brain and possibly crippling my body. The people in his organization are totally destructive and have influence with too many people, police dept, and medical centers. So that when I go in for medical attention regarding my problem the hospit hospitals will say I have a psychiatric problem and use this device on me to the point that I might be put out totally sick, because the facility such as [omitted] of Denver CO, took the chance that attorneys wouldn't sue due to their lack of desire of getting mixed up with syndicated crime. Su

Worse then just using this dangerous weapon on me these people have the plan to bring me to their head-quarters in [omitted]. Within a imles radius of the [omitted] County Park Airport at or around [omitted] where I would be strapped to a bed and forced to perform oral sex acts to the clients of this endeavor. The structure of the place is like a barn converted into a medical center in the middle of no where and on the right is a garage like structure with a high intensity light on it and down the road are several abandonned homes. You can imagine as to why the property in the [omitted] area of [omitted] has been devalued to such an extreme.

So the people followed me and put me into psychiatric hospitals and then in 1980, got me disability based on a he that I have a psych problem and my father sent me money through Western Union, so that he could say he'd kept in touch with me and his statement could be used to constantly commit me as was done to me in Denver, CO., and the money recieved by the U.S. Government also verified that I had a psych problem, as the hispitals tortured me, and instead of my just working in one place I chose to run and keep this going on.

My tather resides at [omitted]. And his phone numbers are [omitted]. He used to reside in [omitted] and didn't permit me to know where he moved to, and he retained the phone number [omitted] so that I could keep in touch with him... When the time came that I would be taken to [omitted] it would all look good that he would verify how could he have had anything to do with kidnapping me when he loves me so and sneds me money. Some of the license plate numbers of the people that have been following are [omitted]. In Colorado where the jail harmed me [omitted]. In New Jersey [omitted]. I must recollect the New Jersey plates and the ones from the city of New York for my next leaflet.

The people who own the above vehicles and just folow people part time with this device, others are full time mobsters who are financially endowed by the Mafia

[Omitted] these people have murdererd my friend [omitted] of in association with [omitted] hisopital, which hospitalized him following his graduation from [omitted] with such high honors and apparently they destroyed his mind with their device they are working on with because they didn't like the idea that such bright person wouldn't go along with the destructive acts that this organization plans for the future and to get him away from me. I have a tape which indicates that his stuttering mother demonstrates the fact that the whole "suicide was set up and the body was found when appropriate with the plan of his mother never had it printed in the newspapers about her son's death and alleges that she sued [omitted] Hisopital but didn't win. These people paid her to have haer son her telephone number os

In Denver CO. I heard that two people were murdered in the hisopital system as they worked for the hisopitals and were against this evil movement and their names were [emitted] and [emitted]. I am not sure who they worked for but they attempted to buck the system and thus were killed to protect the curruption.

This satanic movement has to do with a group from

another planet who disigned this device to destroy humans and fool the pulic that nothing is going on, while cars cruise through the streets with this and allow it to eat the victim's neurologic system, till he has a fatal accident or such

The whole government of the OS is going though

Food and fluid intake cause this device to work bet ter on a person's nervous system. Nuclear Stars Wars plan is actually involved with what these people are doing. If this group gets me into [omitted], then they might actually have me taken to another planet to continue to experiment on me. I had a sexual assault in [omitted] and I was very lucky that the people from this organization didn't take me to the headquarters on [omitted], or the [omitted] Police dept. and one of the prosecutor's office threatened me out of [omitted] as I was attempting to get help there. Medical cneters are trying to get me addict ed to medicines so my family can supply me with the pills and I will have to keep going back to them for the pills as a Doctor [emitted] of Washington D.C. gave me enough puls to kill a horse. Without my ever seeing a neurologist.

Anonymous



# All you deserve to know

Dear Sir,

REQUEST FOR URCENT CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS RELATIONSHIP

RE. TRANSFER OF US\$28.6M AMERICAN DOL-LARS INTO YOUR ACCOUNT

I, on behalf of my other colleagues from different Federal Government of Nigeria owned parastatals decided to solicit your assistance as regards transfer of the above-mentioned amount into your bank account This Fund arose from the over invoicing of various contracts awarded in my parastatal to certain Foreign Contractors sometime ago.

We, as holders of sensitive positions in our various parastatal, were mandated by the Federal Government to scrutinize all payments made to certain Foreign Contractors and we discovered that some of the contracts they executed were grossly over-invoiced either by omission or commission Also, discovered that the sum of US\$33.6M (Thirty Three Million, Six Hundred Thousands US Dollars only) was lying in a suspense account, although the Foreign Contractors were fully paid their contract entitlements after executing the said contracts

We all agreed thay the over-invoiced amount be transferred (for our own use) into a bank account provided by a foreign partner, because we are government workers and the Code of Conduct does not allow us to operate foreign accounts.

However, we have succeeded in transferring some of this over-invoiced money, precisely US\$5.0M (Five Million US Dollars Only) into a foreign account in MOROCCO (North Africa), but the provided of the account in MOROCCO is up to some muschief and refuses to comply to the earlier mutual agreement by

insisting that the total amount be paid into his nominated bank account before disbursement will take effect. If for a meagre US\$5.0M(Five Million US Dollars Only) we are not compensated, is it when the balance of US\$28.6M (Twenty-Eight Million, Six Hundred Thousand US Dollars Only) is transferred that we will be sure of our full compensation?

We are therefore seeking your assistance so that the remaining amount of US\$28.6M can be speedily processed and fully remitted into your nominated bank account. On successful remittance of the fund into your account, you will be compensated with 30% of the amount for your assistance and services.

So far, much have been said and due to our sensitive positions, we cannot afford a slip in this transaction neither can we give out our identity as regards our respective offices; but where relationship is established smooth operations commences, you will be furnished with details of all you deserve to know.

I am at your disposition to entertain any question(s) from you with respect to this transaction, so contact me immediately through the above Fax or Telephone Numbers for further information on the requirements and procedure for this transaction

Please, treat with the strictest confidentially and utmost urgency.

Yours faithful.y

Name withheld upon request, Lagos, Nigeria

# Real culture: Dead culture

Art cannot defend itself. If abstraction is 'art', then, real 'art' is dead. If what is being taught at the elitist "art" schools around the country, is referred to as 'art', then, what is the 'art' of the masters? Are the masters, painters of 'art', or, are they painters of 'something else'. If master's paintings are the real art, then, why is the abstraction being taught in these elitist schools.

It appears the fact that "art is skill" is no longer associated with today's 'art'. Art is whatever the common man wishes it to be. Therefore, 'art' is anything, or, everything. But, in that sense, 'art' is no longer skill. One no longer has to acquire a 'skill' to produce 'art'. One merely has to learn the correctness of color coordination, as in 'wall decoration'.

In essence, nothing, philosophically or intelligently, can be acquired from the viewing of abstracted 'art', without the knowledge of 'that realism' of what it is, that is being abstracted. If this 'realism' is in the mind of the painter and not in the work of the painter, then, how is one to know that an absolute abstraction is, in fact, skillfully wrought? Shall we say that the abstractionist is an artist, as is Rembrandt? ...wouldn't this be a subjugation of Rembrandt's work? It took Rembrandt a life time to achieve his 'art'. Has the abstractionist attained the rank of 'artist' by averting all the years of skill-gathering, or, is the abstractionist really devoid of talent, but, filled with the desire to be a painter? ...the pseudo-artist.

This artist, who has acquire the talent he has, to what ever extent he has, by long years of study and rejection, refuses to be placed within the same mold as the rock guitarist with four chords. When society feels their eight year old child can do the work that laces the museum walls, then, that society should look at themselves as fail ures in the quest for real culture. Dead culture.

Rock music is to music, what white bed sheets are to Navaho rug makers Abstract art is to art, what a blank canvas is to Jan Vermeer, nothing. Abstract 'art' is the production of null-art. .that is, 'art' that cannot be, because the maker hasn't the talent to produce real art.

In Amerika, culture is dead, so, we cannot expect Amerikans to understand the aforementioned, however, within the confines of Amerika, are real artists, who reject the notion that all dribbling is 'art'. Art is skill. Abstracted skill is unintelligible decoration. Jackson Pollack is a wall decorator, Mondrian is a wall decorator. The norde of Guggenheim painters, are wall decorators Rembrandt is an artist. Rubens is an artist. Tchaikovsky is an artist, Itzhak Perlman is an artist. How can one place these names beside those pseudo-artistic wall decorators (Pollack, Motherwell, Hockney, etc.), and not know the difference? Surely, one can easily see, that, Culture in Amerika is Dead.

—Unsolicited Fax received from a "Classical Painter, Sculptor, Playwright, Poet Living In New England." 1st word

Linus

Signature

Signa

it so revelatory when women and men orbited the carth. looked down, and saw no borders. All the frontiers that describe our social lives, from property lines to national boundaries, were nowhere to be seen. Human eyes finally looked down not on a classroom globe but "the real thing" They regarded exp nos unbroken by dashed lines, color sche-("Let's go to one of them orange contines" he said, looking at the map), and en rinous n, mes floating above prancipanties. There was just the earth and us clinging to its whirling face. Missing also were those inventions that allow us to navigate our planet: lines of longitude and latitude. These rules describe and bind our world together, make it possible to get from here to there. Unfortunately, when

invented, they made it easier for plunderers

and conquerors to invade distant lands. The

astronauts, however, were awed by their expe-

rience and reported a feeling of goodwill

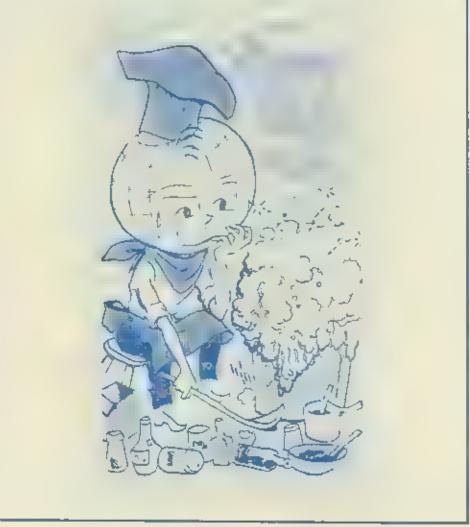
toward all

This astronauts' (and cosmonauts') awareness of these scientific and cultural fictions when they related their in-orbit insights But it raises the question: would giving a minority of the population a spin in low earth orbit allow the majority of us to exist in peace? When conflict flares, instead of sending in the peacekeeping troops, perhaps we send in the space shuttles. One global go round and divisiveness is lost. Then again, it may just provide the malcontents an opportunity to view—and lust after—further flung territory.

The grow exponentially, without a resultant decrease in conflicts. Would matters improve any if every ethnic and religious group were given their own global segment? Often, declared grievances are masks for disputes over choice parcels. It isn't that we want our own land, we want theirs. Whether you look at World War II or the Salem witch trials, it boils down to land grabs. It's somehow unacceptable to come right out and state our true intention. You've got what we

Map of He design 1 (200 points of the second of the second

AMER



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"One function of the (U.S.) Office of the

Geographer...is keeping track of... "mythical kingdoms" or "ephemeral states." These are

nonexistent countries that ordinary people periodically claim to have founded or become the rulers of."

DAVID OWEN, "EPHEMERAL STATES,"

THE ATLANTIC, JANUARY 1988,
VOLUME 261, NUMBER 1, PAGE 16

As increased, so has our philosophical questioning. Cultural and biological boundaries long regarded as absolute disappear when given a heightened perspective. Race determines certain physical attributes and nothing more. Ethnicity describes even less. The ultimate division, female and male, also grows increasingly blurred. We have two sexes but many genders. Differences scribed to sex actually reside to the invitad cultural roles we select among or have imposed.

boundary remains absolute. The states we inhabit—emotional, physical, cultural—are arbitrary. They are ephemeral states: temporary, flexible, and as substantial as any other reality.

Having sions as arbitrary, we face endless possible connections. Frequently, the loss of absolutes is regarded with fear and suspicion. If there are no absolutes, it is said, dissension and chaos will follow. However, in an acceptance of relativity, we may select our nature and forge lasting bonds. We may begin to consider and celebrate the many ways people come together to form communities. Who can predict what brings two people together, from disparate backgrounds, in time and space, to become a couple? How do neighborhoods or unions form a coherency and establish identities? From the ephemeral we may create a core around which to shape a world

AS summers at the shore. Just off the beach, a small stand of rocks was exposed at low tide. We would occupy these barnacled stones every day, declaring them our own country. The name and constitution of this nation could change by the hour. To us children, it was as real as the United States. We recognized it—no outside authority was necessary to ratify our existence. And we accepted the regularity of the ocean's reclamation of our land and its return

Perhaps we have it all backwards. We have too few countries—not too many. By declaring our own individual states, we may finally recognize each other, equally.

EXCLUSIVE TO THE NEWS OF THE WHIRLED

Tou said you wanted to know more I about my life in Washington, especially my work as a "Washington lawyer." Well, nfe is pretty good right now! My Job has been nice and steady lately, as opposed to the usual frantic state. This is because Congress is out of session and won't convene again until after January As you know, I work in the legislative area. I foltow, analyze, and draft legislation on behalf of a federal agency. As my job is so closely hed to Congress, I am often at the whim A Tio. 5 Congressional leaders. If they fecture they want to hold a mark-up in two days on a bill we've been following, I get to stay late and prepare for it! (A markup is when a Committee meets to amend and vote on a bill that has been referred to it.) Or, if a bill is to go to the floor for a final vote on short notice, I-along with others I work for-have the pleasure of canceling any plans and staying late to analyze the bill and any possible amendments. Perhaps a description of what happened with one particular bill this fall will serve as a good example. We had followed this bill since its introduction in both the House and Senate in the spring of 1995 After its introduction (and before, as we nad the privilege of reviewing and commenting on earlier drafts), my job was to analyze and summarize the bill, along with any amendments offered along the way. I attended hearings on the bill where persons with an interest in the leg islation, like my boss, have the chance to testify on its good and bad points—attended the mark ups in both the House and Senate, and met with House and Senate staff numerous times to confer on its various provisions. Things tend to take longer in the House. The mark-up on this bill lasted more than three days and went late into the evenings, while the Senate markup took only two hours. The bill got snagged along the way in the House, with various special interests demanding that their amendments be included. They would also flex their muscles and urge Members to defeat the bill on the floor. This is why it took over a year and a half to get the bill to the floor! As a result, it took the Committees more than a year after passing it to work out the differences between House and Senate versions—and only a few weeks before Congress was to dojourn for the year. This is when the real fun began! Since time was of the essence, different drafts of the final bill were flying across my desk every day. My job was to read each draft and find out what the differences were from the last draft. This is tedious work as the bills were over 300 pages long The only way to do a thorough Job is to go line by-line, word for word! We were often told what the changes were but people can be pretty sneaky. We would read the bill for ourselves to make sure nothing extra was added or removed. We often found unmentioned additions. It's amazing how much difference a change in dates in one section can make! Anyway, this was about the most frustrating experience of my career. I would spend hours

RECEIVER - SEN THE

An artist must have sentences to go with the work-Martin Kippenberger Intelligence, not information, is what managers need to make decisions— Larry Kahaner What I find most sus-

penseful now is the relationship between virtual space and real space—Rem Koolhas Perception is reality—Mary Matalin Imagine the whole architectural profession is run through a shredder and only tiny fragments of plankton are what remain, the question is can you work with that plankton?—Rem Koolhas The self is hardly a unified thing; its boundaries slip off in all directions James Ogilyy -.... let us now abandon our hopeless search for new forms and define the artful dimension of architecture as iconograph-

ic—Robert Venturi It is not the past which haunts us, it is images of the past is George Steiner Wyth is not defined by the object of its message, but by the way in which it utters this message: there are formal limits to myth,

there are no 'substan-

der.—Daniel C. Dennett

tial' ones—Roland Barthes We no longer think of the atom as a mechanism. Today it is another world— Paul Valery Varied repetition... is a basic and common principle of natural order—Maitland Graves Symmetry is static—that is to say quiet; that is to say, inconspicuous—William Addison Dwiggins Space is elegance—Bob Lassiter Every formal process proceeds from a principle, and the study of this principle requires precisely what we call dogma.—Igor Stravinsky One cannot spend one's time in being modern when there are so many more important things to be— Wallace Stevens This might be the place for a few remarks on space, a word that changes its meaning with one's angle of vision or manor of speaking-Paul Valery The sky is not empty; it has this volume, is a sort of arena. . .its space is divided by a structure of clouds, and it has different structures within it, rising air, falling air, standing waves and thermals, that often are not really marked by clouds—James Turrell Smoothness and order, the manifest attributes of teeth, have entered into the very nature of power. . . The example of modern architecture shows how difficult it is to separate smoothness from order. Their Canetti The city, itself, is traditionally a military weapon, and is a collective shield or plate armor, an extension of the castle of our very skins—Marshall McLuhan It is characteristic and even diagnostic of the Foraminifera that development proceeds by a well marked alteration of rest and of activity—of activity during which the protoplasm increases, and of rest during which the shell is formed Tiving thing or a part of a living thing, or the artifact of a living thing, organized in any case against this battle against disor-

...bridges and plumbing— Marcel Duchamp The microwave, the waste disposal, the orgasmic elasticity of the carpets:-Jean Baudrillard relationships within the future will be far more ambiguous and far more uncertain than they seem to be now . . . A kind of California spreading across the globe-J. G. Ballard What is worrying many friends of America is that there appears to be a long-term erosion in the whole nation's sense of being a community—Charles Hampden-Turner and Alphons Trompenaars Cyberspace is a physically inhabitable, electronically generated alternate reality, entered by means of direct links to the brain-that is, inhabited by refigured human "persons" separated from their physical bodies, which are parked in "normal" space—Allucquère Roseanne Stone The spectacle is not a collection of images; rather, it is a social relationship between people that is mediated by images—Guy Debord "Look, a monster!"-movie character, "Godzilla" Editor—David Shibler

Foing through a draft in the morning, just to have another draft on my desk in the afternoon. No one knew when the bill was going to the floor for a final vote. Rumors were flying left and right. Our contacts on the Committees didn't even know what was happening, Meanwhile, we had to take each draft seriously. As the final days of the session were approaching, everyone wanted to "get the hell out of Dodge" so they could all hit the campaign trail and win the opportunity to return to all this chaos come fanuary The White House and the Legislative leadership then assumed the chore of shepherding the bill through. As it turned out, this bill had great budget implications. It had grown bigger then all of us, at least bigger than its sponsors had intended We reviewed drafts day after day, to make Plankton for Readers sure nothing inappropriate was added and that all our agreed-upon provisions were still there Then we waited. And waited. I was told it "would not be a good idea" to take my long-scheduled day trip to Philadelphia the last Saturday of the session because something might happen with the bill. I dutifully awoke early that morning and turned on C-SPAN, I caught a press conference of House and Senate coders claiming they had nailed down the budget bill—which included my bill—and that it was to be voted on that day, I rushed to cal, my co-worker, who contacted a higher-up at the agency. The higherup instructed me to be on the corner outside my house in one hour. He would

drop off the latest draft of the bill—that he had helped to draft during the previous night—I would rush to work, make the appropriate copies, and go through it again [ line by line. A few of my co-workers also showed up at the office. And we waited some more. It seemed as if the bill was going nowhere that afternoon, so we escaped to the shopping mall for a couple of hours (Good thing I didn't go to Philadelphia!) Upon our return, we decided it was fruitless to hang around, as no one knew when the vote would be. As it turned out, the bill passed later that night—with no surprises! The President signed it into law a day or two later. Nearly two years of my life's work had finally made it into the law books! That Monday, I sat down at my computer and furiously typed out a 43-page section by section summary (OK, it took a few days; ! was working with a summary I had been updating continuously over the years). Once the summary was completed and distributed, I set to the task of providing briefings to, and fielding questions from, co-workers and the public Which I am still doing to this day. But, like I said, it is much quieter around here now, I get to take lunch most days. We still have about six weeks until this zaminess starts all over again with a new bill. Or with a bill we followed last Congress that never passed. (I never throw any of my files away.) The bil. I described was unusual. It passed. Most

THE NEWS OF THE WHIRLED \$ 16 JUNE 1904

Y ell, that just about summarizes most

of my last two years on the job-

I hope you found it interesting!

don't but are re-introduced!

year after year after year.

'Bye from Washington'

# **FURTHER ILLUMINATUS**\* REVELATIONS

keven fitzgerald



Ms. Wilson was a major step forward in an ongoing Illuminatus project to convert human beings into patterns of information and algorithms, existing only in virtual space, and embodied in only virtual bodies.

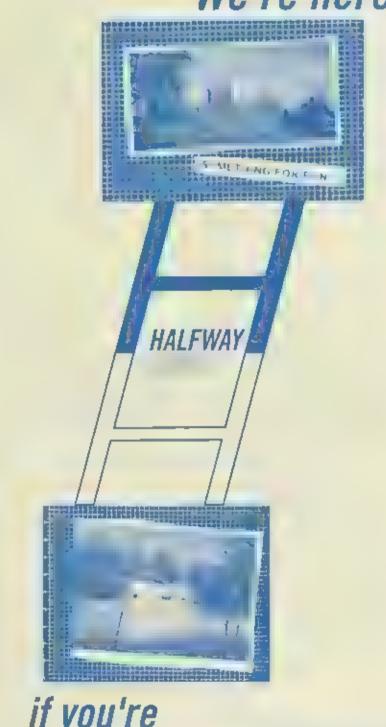
### GLENDALE. GLENDALE

rearly 50 years ago a young girl's life was ended, temporarily, by murder. Even for 1970's America a murder committed during the course of a petty theft was not a remarkable event. Of interest to only the smallest of audiences, the sad news was target-cast to only the victim's families and friends, the father unable to afford the expense of the customary N.O.D. But this father was Robert Anton Wilson, who like other artists before and after him, saw little of the wealth his work would one day bring to others. And some of these friends, admirers of the father's work, were pioneers in artificial intelligence and life extension research. They volunteered their time and money to see to it that as much as possible of the daughter's remains would be cryogenically preserved. They hoped, and some of them believed, that their efforts would lead to a day when she could be revived. Yesterday, in Glendale, Arizona and California, Illuminatus<sup>c</sup> researchers, following in these pioneers' footsteps, announced that they had awakened the girl from her long deep sleep.

Thummatuse, based upon the 20th Century Illuminatus<sup>e</sup> Trilogy of Robert Anton Wilson, is the single most lived World<sup>c</sup> today. This despite allegations from competing Worldse that Illummatus<sup>c</sup> functions upon an illegal metaprogram that subverts the programs of other Worldse in effect, reducing them to sub-programs of *Illummatus*<sup>c</sup>. It is charged that Illuminatuse has no existence other than as a parasitic/synthesizing program whose content is really a virtual pastiche of all the real competing virtual realities. These same critics question the amount of truth in yesterday's startling revelations. They maintain that the latest Illuminatus<sup>e</sup> upgrade is no more than a labyrinthine ruse meant to deflect and confuse suspicious F.C.C. regulators. Washington insiders, however, feel the threat of any real E.C.C. investigations, and resulting criminal proceedings against Illuminatus<sup>e</sup> are very unlikely. Rehable sources, although hesitant to gauge the relative amount of truth to falsehood in their



We're here



if you're almost there.



RECEIVER -- SENIOLR

THE RI

eo-marginalism's utter ubiqui and ultimate hegemony a clearly unassailable today the dawn of our nullennial foreclosur Rarely has such a seemingly fringe enti sprung to such prominence without at prior intimation-let alone maintained donunance despite such persistent rejoir dery. The task before me is to divine the madness, to query this rapid ascendance To do this, a bit of reconnoitering is order. So, let's begin shall w

You put your left foot i you take your left foot or You put your left foot and you shake it all about. So goes the hokey-pokey. Where do one stand? How and where should or proceed? I ask these questions of myse countless times each day-and eve more so given this recent turn events But where, I ask you, did it : begin? Was it in some obscure journ or in a chance meeting between acadmics in a men's room during a brea between panels at one of those inte nunable colloquia? Did it spring to li fully formed from the incubus of graduate seminar where misinterpret tions metasticized? Or is it merely Derridean deceit perpetuated by peripatetic footnote which attache itself to the point of least resistance

I reckon we can be more certain that that. Wasn't it Guillermo Gomez Per who once wrote, "Like the border graff says, Simulacra stops here." At fit I thought I stumbled across this quote some remaindered and out-of-print jou nal offered at a close-out sale in Berkele Ah...for inscrutable sources But no, was actually something he had writte elsewhere; where I can't say or a unwilling to presently disclos

The quote-remarkable though it ma be-alone isn't sufficient to explain the ruckus we now encounter. What pro pelled it forward? Was it a seminar gas ing to fill its allotted time? Or was it matter of some sincere-thoug nonetheless displaced-inquiry into a item that warranted only cursory review No one recalls. But who really cares for that matter? To iterate what I have already said, the ubiquity is upon usso what matters? I do

> respectively to a second sustance, mo-manginalism is often musinterpreted as brethren nee marginalia. For the purposes of ti this assion, I will continue to emp oy the former ter even as it implinges upon the latt

2 The answer is quite sin ple. The article und consideration was written by committee

And I don't have the time to pursue that he Wait for a future issue of The News of the White emera

## ENEO-MARGINALISM

# the ubiquity is upon us— so what matters?

Many contend that this apocryphal quote by Giullermo G. P. was a figment of his pro-1-tean persona and nothing more, a tweaking usof some Baudrillardian deceit. But perhaps there a germ of truth evident here—an elemment, an insipid cipher, a seminal predestinator of what the future portends. That is what I partially contend.

1. Getting back to G. Gomez P. and to what is merucial element in this discussion: in which direction did the graffiti read? This cuts to the esvery essence of this most ephemeral of conne cepts—that of the simulacra. If it faced elfnorth or south GGP isn't willing to disclose. One might presume that it was facing north of as an authentic rejoinder to dyspeptic theory. As one ventures south of the border, the alesoteric world of the Franco/Post-structural Tæsthetics lack the requisite utility, credibility, lk or panache. In a world of unrelenting r-verisimilitude, this polysyllabic jargon falls te flat. The ability or desire to colonize simply disn't appropriate.\*

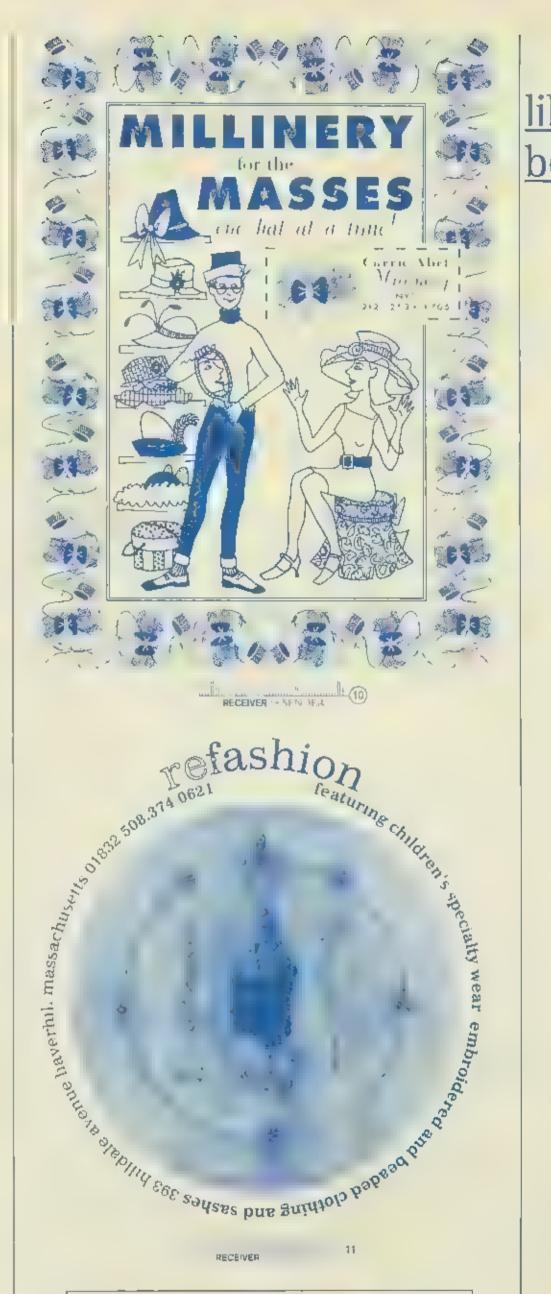
aOn the other hand, what if one of aGuilermo's friends' scrawled this rejoinder don signage facing north? Might this ? address issues of facile (and clearly unexamined) representations? Might this be an minstance of a theoretical resistance to colonamzing ideas? How dare Baudrullard to proclaim that there is no real here! The closest he has come st to this is on the dwan in front of his TV watchining spaghetti westerns. Maybe his prescription f-fits for the French Academy and twenty Y blocks of midtown Manhattan, but isn't it 11 presumptive of him to proclaim this for nother cultures?"

e. This is clearly all supposition. How did Multi-culturalism segue into Neo Marginalism? The facts are clearly unclear, but, alas, my allotted space has run out. Maybe I have only succeeded in identifying possible place of origin. Maybe I have amerely recast the debate."

4 Doesn't this bear a striking resemblance to the impolitic wanderings of Waldo? Waldo—that most cavalier of cultural inigrators— has no accountability. He merely strolls wherever some santable sual clutter is present, clearly agnorant to the subtle cultural or dynamics apon which he intrudes. Can we fathout the disastrous tamefications of inculcating cultural obliviousness to our progeny? 7e 5 Guillermo, m fact, did study anguistics in Mexico so such a con tention iso t so far fetched as it may seem. Maybe this spawned a new branch of graffin called conceptual graffit, whose thegibility existed on a cognitive level as opposed to a perceptual or

6 This issue of high theory's relevance—or even applicability—to proumstances outside of Eurocentric academic circles is a serious matter of concern for representatives of indigenous cultures. Does not this prohibition of an authentic experience foreclose aesthetic options? Isn't this an eerie paralle, to Modernism's mandating of transcultural formalist priorit «

7 Aren't you really frustrated by those articles that really don't accomplish what they set out to do? In this instance, I am constrained by a contractual obagation with my editor. So let me say that I hope this article exists as the first in a series to attempt to come to terms with the rapidly evolving theoretical substrata





### like other artists before and a

uspicions, are quick to point to the widely held belief that decisive positions, from the Charperson of the E.C.C., down to the Oval Office, and key Congressional Committee chairs, are all currently held by major Illuminatus' stockholders. They say that any public investigations are mere window dressing. and that genuine investigations would simply not be allowed. It is clear that if yesterday's Illummatus<sup>c</sup> claims can be substantiated, these questions will be as dead as this morning's news. And it is unlikely that it will be in the interest of those who could resuscitate them to do so.

→oday *Illuminatus*<sup>c</sup> spokespersons attempted to address some of the concerns raised by yesterday's revelations. They conceded that it was true that only Ms. Wilson's brain, and not her entire body had been preserved. In response to the allegations of Nobel Prize winning neurobiologist Kevin Wu. who said in an interview that the entire procedure was a physical impossibility because the girl's spinal fluid had not been preserved, the spokespersons said Dr. Wu's objections were without founda tion. They claimed that Ms Wilson's spinal fluid had been saved, but that in any case, was not necessary for the procedure. As to the problem of a body, the spokespersons said that Ms. Wilson experiences her virtual body to be just as real to her as any of us experience our own one to be. Coalition questions as to the possibility of the survival of Ms. Wilson's personality may never be satisfactorily answered. The spokespersons explained that both Ms Wilson and the Illuminatus' A I. Computer feel that while the computer is in control of what are the virtual body's autonomic systems, Ms. Wilson herself is in full control of all of her volitional movements. As to the question of the survival of her personality, the spokespersons confessed that it was a question the theologians and philosophers would probably be arguing about for years. They did, however, vehemently deny that Ms. Wilson was a major step forward in an ongoing Illuminatus<sup>o</sup> project to convert human beings into patterns of information and algorithms, existing only in virtual space, and embodied in only virtual bodies. One spokesperson joked, "I wouldn't want to discourage, or scare anyone away from Illuminatus<sup>c</sup> but anyone who seriously makes an allegation like that has probably spent one too many days there." When asked if Ms. Wilson dreamt, the same spokesperson answered enigmatically, "She dreams, she just doesn't know when she is."

## plassifica

Porter Sq -2F30+ seek same to share house near 1 \$153 trimit game by May then \$230 eves BRIKL 1 brm avail sunity 4 / brm apt all artist home NEWTON- 2 F sk prof indep non-smk F 25+ to shr 3b; aprese bus trpice; or pike; summ friendly! \$235+

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ALISTON 1F needed-share 2 bdrm+ext rm nonsmkr 3 min to T+BU bus BEAUTYI 4275 w/ht, hw



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'84. The situation:

Thousands of student.

and civilians needing

places to five and a 2%

rental vacancy rate. The

result: Societal musical

chairs—when you're out, you're

OUY. The story: I thought my life

had grown too comfortable. Was I may a rut? I hadn't changed apartments in years—unusual in this town. Somehow, an arbitrarily gathered group of students had coalesced into a functioning, supportive unit beyond graduation. To appreciate what I

had, I decided to gain some perspective and check

out the housing situation. Since I had no intention of

actually moving out, I didn't tell my roommates about
my plans. I clipped ads and made calls from my room. I
decided to look at an apartment a day for a month. I chose
more selectively—and whimsically—than I would have had I
really needed to find a new home. In the stampede to locate
suitable housing before the first of every month, it's a wonder
that Boston doesn't suffer more roommate-search-related homicides. Without this pressure, I could go about the process calmly and

with more attention. I'd note the more subtle aspects of situations

vacant. I regarded my activity as a trial run. Someday, my group would

break up due to outside relationships, jobs, interests, acquisitions. Ed best

prepare since living alone wasn't economically possible just yet. At the worst,

I'd meet some interesting people and maybe pick up some decorating hints...

BAR WARRY TO COME & ...

Of Call Sinform and a second

CAMBR DCE isn't so diflerent from Dorchester F 30's seeks same for spacious excellent apt in sale plea ant Ashmont sec tion of Dorchester I am quet, neat respons be ixe books, classical music \$ 75 + utilities, worth more. Cats are welcome.

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SOM 2M F seek 2housemates to share our loosely cooperative home. No pets. No smokers preffered \$130 blease call

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JP M 22+ wanted to share born apr with 2 others to of trees, hear the

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JP is Par of Traped seems for beauting the dim no property or call his test avair low how aug \$1 on the seems.



asked why and when the depart no roommate would vacate. They said she wasn't precisely moving out but definitely leav- said that amongst them led. The one spreading. Determining the date they'd been through thous eagled on the floor looked, and the first three glared was dicey as they didn't sands of roommate inter- up "Make yourself right at at the guitanst have the proper equip- views and nine out of ten home." ment. It seems this room- deserved a whack sight mate had just started fad- unseen ing like a dimming light. As she became more. As we sat taking the able but they run the ad. The front door swung transparent, her voice doorbel rang On the responded less to outside stimuli It was all the others could do to keep her from frightening guests. "Who wants Ha oween be on the safe side

people around the block

pair of twins with doublevision feeling lonely and looking for another separated twin-

be over 2000 years oid apiece. Their ideal roomthemselves as Ameras,



Beinor, and Hekabe--or currently, Phil, Heather Don, Kurl, and Hekabe. Three of them had set up house (in 1740 or so) with Very odd eye-care situation in town, he their pets, if they are, they and obsequiousness with was it me. When the others joining over the profession als years, (Kurt/Beingr was "Philosophical oculists" ters through "temporal always referred to as "The they insisted on being reconstruction" He would Kid," having moved in called for their holistic alter the space/time fabric around '06.) They said approach, Truly believing by introducing minute that I they were unable to that eyes are the windows errors in an event's past locate another of their to the soul, they rejected kind, they could share a solely clinical approach quarters with selected to vision care They read "ephemeral" roommates, retinas the way other Inexpicably, they jibed advisors read palms. Are best with Communications majors from eastern Jersey. I asked them what had made them all settle in Boston and Don/Delpios said "it's the Athens of America." We at laughed.

The address turned out to be an abandoned buildows with a baseball bat velvet paintings held high. My reflexes quickly took overducked and shrieked in saw my face, cursed, then apologized for the attack. Soon a group of fifteen or Iwenty people stepped explained that their ad prvt expiveg immac was a lure for an od

Roommate the ad specifically to deposited me in front of a excused myself attract him and eyed me large cushy chair. The wantly, as if searching for tenants were all there signs of plastic surgery. I One passed over the wall neck bigot, another a said they were taking a with a paintbrush-no polygamist on the lam. big risk swinging first and paint, just stroking it asking questions later, seemed. Another dusted maphrodite, and the last, The person with the bat places no-one ever dust-

became distant and she stoop was a figure wearing an asbestos suit as if fresh from lighting an oiwell blaze. Through the faceplate we could see a person completely con-365 days a year?" one sumed in flames. A hose said. She was barely vish ran from the back of the ble now they risisted but suit its open end betching were waiting until May to sparks and a roiling black cloud "Absolutely no As advertised A line of at the figure, A muffled voice promised to keep it contained. The door was Not a misprint. Half of a slammed in his? her? Meanwhile people con-

tion. Who are these peo-These forks turned out to pie? Are they looking for a radio, TV, stereo, amplifiroommate or having a ball describing themselves? mate would be another of "Crifters" added a incetheir long-lived kind, rustic touch, I found my Though there was an hand reaching for the obvious age problem, we 'phone and drawing back hit it off and I stayed late numerous times. Finally I chatting. They introduced rang them up and identi-En , Deipylos, Shamash, gist at loose ends and made a date. Then, disguising my voice, I called again, claiming to be a zoologist specializing n teaching hand capped bats echolocation in my spare time. Finally in the guise of an expert orthoepist with a skin condition. I mumbled questons for a hour

> female corrective lenses unnatural impediments to true percephon? they asked Would we be more mora



ing saw a light on haide If we all possessed X-ray and the door was ajar so i eyes and knew our neighpushed it open. I quickly bor entire? Their obseslearned someone was at sion failed to explain the home because a figure daisy-ye-low wallpaper in lunged out of the shad- the kilchen and numerous

The mind reels.

the light, my assadant. Dplx sns lvly mmte wd grp nsehld shr uti fd w/d M/F bin Vict sks p-s p-b ad prish indwd v firs UM-

roommate who had stiffed. I reached to ring the door-. Sometimes on weekends. whether we iked it or not "

Why never a dul moment Seed Day Care here? No room's availconstantly just to meet



Certifiable people. masochists. 'Phone constantly ringing, someone describing the apartment, they hire of it, they lie, sending callers all over the metro area the rooms, checking running er), investigating the bathsticking .

Tough house a group of stand-up comedians. Life was a non-stop sitcom. They knew each other so fied myself as a meta ur- well that they finished charge. Would I walk the essay question on the each others lokes

Ciones

Seven gu tar players:

was a expert in chronoproject at MIT, of course -- here, the cost of the rent. The doubling would produce a discontinuity in wasn't the case here. The ing to the present. He dog expressly to be domproduced the glut of rental me agents in Boston proper So far, he d managed to reduce the number of Brighton by 91.8%.

The nterview went well the branches came a but the last question was shouted hello and a rope third shneked, "Where's a new one. "Are you at all ladder A tree-house, built the ax?!" I chose discrexenophobic?" they were all average was -surprise! - a The only time I was room, I was struck by a Caucasian types. They forestry major and Dave a tempted to move. The feeling of deja vu-somesmiled when I pointed this carpenter ("I know good woman who showed me thing like this had hapout and said ( misunder- wood ") Smokers were around had an entrancing pened to me long ago. ASS d/w respon ite, yr stood. Ted here is from out as were the usual smile and an amazing. And suddenly I knew from the dark. They NOT SEX AD prof Xpres another planet and pets. Dogs and cats record collection, Her I reached to my quiver shape-shifters squirrels, "We had 'em music was impressive Setting it in my bow, I

wanted before I could press it. assumes his natural decided to like it And they collection. Sorely temptindeed. This guy was a The door buzzed itself appearance—or that of were here first." Their led, suddenly felt a sight senal shafter—they rep- open and I stepped into an appliance. To demonresented situations going the foyer. The carpet car-strate, Ted began to grow back ten years. They ned me gently down the limitation wood-grain but I claimed they had written half to the fiving room and noticed the time and I always felt that Aliston

> One was a certified redthe third a radical hernatch, a guitar player. I asked who was leaving

open to a short hallway At the end was another door Turning the knob, it stuck. I forced t open, pushing against it with my shoulder. Inside was another hallway and another door This knob turned but the wood was swollen and stuck, I leaned into it again and it sprang open, vibrating like a plucked smokers!" my host yelled giving directions, when guitar string. Another Another turn door Another jam, Door Stuck. Forced...over and over to revea a bathfinually poking through froom the sound of water all The sort of ad that really dimensions (will my pot- long...hair clogging a Had a questionnaire OM stimulates the imagina- ted pain fit in here?), drain rust stains on longer and more arcane counting outlets (clock- porcelain, chipped than a Scientology test 1 noleum . faded wal paper .. smel of plastic room door's method of shower curtain over garlic...I take the next day

> a large dog, raising the question if this was all academic. The dog hated The important aspect was cats, music, typing, parthe \$5 differential. The ties. closed doors guy who placed the ad screens over windows. and a host of other things.



effect changes-albeit house needed an author-

large Elm tree. From up in held it closed, another ran This by its occupants only lion. seemed slightly odd as months before. Bility belongs to a race of would upset the kept them for a lot of money. bell but it rang itself he "lets himself go" and Billy explained, "so we which were gaps in my I drew back my arm

E m Blight, And fa.

was another universe and found out it was literal in neighborhood Somehow, para el universes had separated here lopening access to a nearly identical dimension (the only difference was that over there, vinyl sidng had never been discovered). The benefit was enormous, a doubling of talking to me was simply Before 6pm it's the Bad irental units overnight But i a matter of courtesy. They there was an odd catch The gateway between universes was unstable Though my interviewers thought highly of me, they called the parallel uni-



verse apartment to see if I had interviewed there. too. The answer came that I hadn't shown I was told, with regrets, that they couldn't accept me as a "single" It was a delcate balance

was placed in a room with four other applicants and given an exam. Thirtyquestion, "Bills are a) bird When pets are mentioned beaks, b) group of guys twice in the space of a tiny named William, c) to be ad, it's no secret who's in paid ASAP" I aced the dog? Feed it? Allow it to penls of eating another come and go as it roommate's groceries pleased? Of course it was which counted for haif my final rent I asked if they were psychiatrists. Statisticians? No, physed majors. Lieft without waiting for my score

"Loosely cooperative"

logical mechanics. Grad Usually people are meant that at one unaware of their bondage moment they would be Outraged by the housing to and manipulation by the epitome of largess decided to remedy mat- pretend not to care. This one another then, at the returned, the apartment blink of an eye, be at each was jammed with other other's throats over an applicants being interimagined slight. A true viewed. I accused my family. The dramatic shifts roommates of trying to in character were spec- force me out. They contacular to witness. I'd ask fronted me with my recent how the heat was and it activities. would take twenty min- someone a roommate the chain of events lead- house had acquired the lutes to get a direct knew was friends with response as each someone I met in my travwould then be able to making. They felt the deferred to another in a less and word got back. To Chip in Dale "After you," protect small ones that may tanan figure to unify them no, no, after you" roundcumulatively alter our and establish order None robin. Finally, one would world. He said he got the would allow having a per- venture, "It's fine," and the idea from watching son in that position. They others would close in for relieved when I explained Doctor Who The tempo- swore the dog got the bills the kill. While they bick- my true intentions and ra, stream he decided to paid on time but it was a lered, I inspected the that I had no intention of enter was the one that subtle dynamic beyond premises. The lying room leaving. I swore that my was spotless but the experiences taught me kitchen broadened and Was ucky to get out alive enriched the term But what would we do "squalor." When the stick- with a, of these people? agents named Larry in. The directions led into the ling bathroom door was Arnold Arboretum and a displayed, one roommale for some WD-40 and the

> knowledge of popular and chose an arrow She had all those records carefully took aim

> biggest concern. Dutch unease as she put on an album "that'll captivate you." For no good reason, i begged off and left hur-

> > A sense of humor is essentia, in a nine-person home with only one bath-

One of those times where I to lowed someone that the household felt was perfect. Having decided, make a go of expressing interest in the questions but it was obvious the matter was settled and people were eager to go about their business. Realizing this, I answered with whatever came into my head. Hobbies? Draining hot water heaters and collecting stray dogs. Job? Chopshop go-fer. College? PLO Commando School. Nothing fazed them. One kept on planting little seedings. Another decat-haired the sofa. The other air-guitared an Echord. I got up and left and no-one noticed

Seeing my own apartment advertised was a sobering experience Who was leaving behind minute time limit, mostly our backs? To catch the multiple choice Sample culprit, I called and made an appointment under a false name then left until t



Evidently themselves against a last-minute departure my roommates placed the ad. They were that this was my home. The interviewees, when appraised of the situation. became surly and refused to leave. The ad said a room was avalable and one of them meant to have it. When they tormed a line to see my



THE ST. BOTOLPH CLUB FOUNDATION was established in 1963 to recognize and support artists working in or associated with New England The Foundation's annual Award is presented to an artist who has demonstrated outstanding talent and an exceptional diversity of accomplishments Recipients include Jane Alexander, Steven Trefonides. Aaron Siskind, Harold Wright, Annie Dillard, Varujan Boghosian, David Wheeler, and John Edgar Wideman. Since 1981, the Foundation also has made grants-in-aid to artists at an earher stage in their careers; seeking out situations where it can "make a difference" through the combination of financial support, recognition and encouragement. The Foundation is supported entirely by contributions from members and friends of the St. Botolph Club.

RECEIVER -- SENI FR









Louise Deromed was born in 1906 in the Tyrol region that is today northern Italy. She came to the United States in 1928 to marry Edward Valentine, a recent widower with eight children. He had written home to his sister, asking if there was a young woman who would come to Pennsylvania and become his wife. The circumstances surrounding Louise's decision are still a matter of speculation within the family. She provided few details about her life in Italy, and the barriers of language and memory make uncovering her history difficult. Whatever her motivation, she became a wife, and mother to children whose oldest was only a few years younger than she. Louise and Edward also had two children of their own. It was with the family of her daughter that Nona—as Louise came to be called—spent her last thirty years.

Following the death of her husband in 1939. Nona held a number of jobs. including owning a bar that served the local coal miners. When the business was sold, she went to live with her daughter and family in New Jersey. She brought few possessions with her and carried the same upon their move north. In her lack of acquisitiveness, Nona was an aberration in her immediate family. Little was disposed of, whether it was mechanical or personal. Within their rambling New England farmhouse and barn, a rich trove of artifacts could provide documentation of the family's past—or a metal plate to repair a burst radiator. None of this collection, however, belonged to Nona. She was distinguished by the treasures she had dispensed with. When quizzed on the status of any family article once in her keeping, the answer invariably came back that she had thrown it out. Nona added little to the furnishings of her room. She had no sentiment for cards and correspondence: once read, such missives became scrap paper.

It was only after Nona's death that her family discovered what she saved. Preserved within her prayer book were over 100 religious cards collected over her lifetime. The majority were memento mori cards: pre-printed death notices to which the appropriate name and date were added. The cards represented neighbors and family from the old country and America. Nona had told another relative that she would select a card at random each night and say a prayer for that person. In her last days, Nona imagined all these people alive and young. She believed she was preparing for a gathering that was, at times, her own funeral.

For the people in her life, Nona had great love and generosity. Her lack of attachment to things did not lie in a failure to care for people. Would these cards have such significance if Nona collected many other things? It is their presence in a life absent of such sentiment that they become profound. And it is always a question how we all preserve our memories-especially that of our departed loved ones. What was Nona saving when she kept these cards? What are we saving when we keep anything?

Presented here are a select few of Nona's cards-and her own. Within them you may see the life of one remarkable woman, her family and friends. And you may see us all.



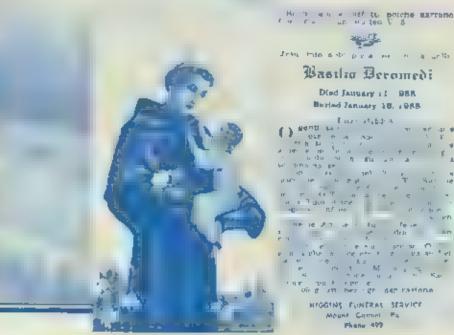
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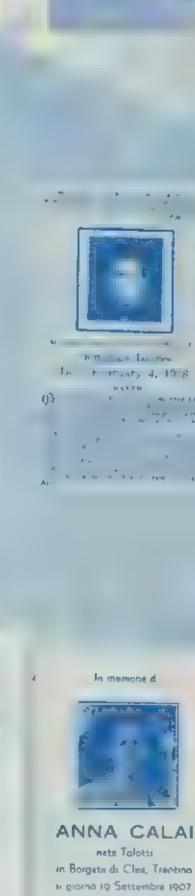
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Basilio Beromedi Died January 12 BBR Burlad January 18, 1988 HIGGINS FUNERAL STRVICT Mount Cornel Phase 499





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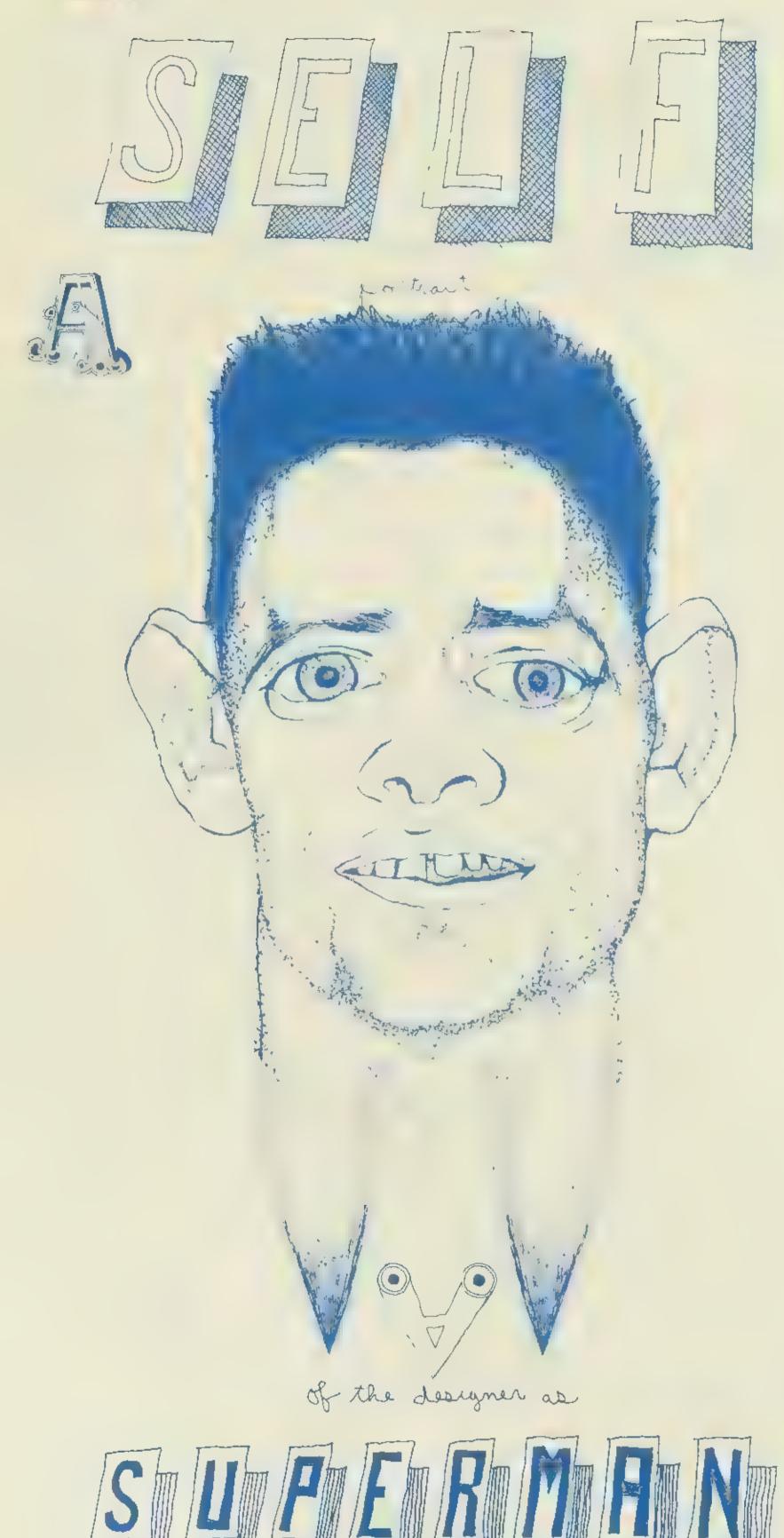


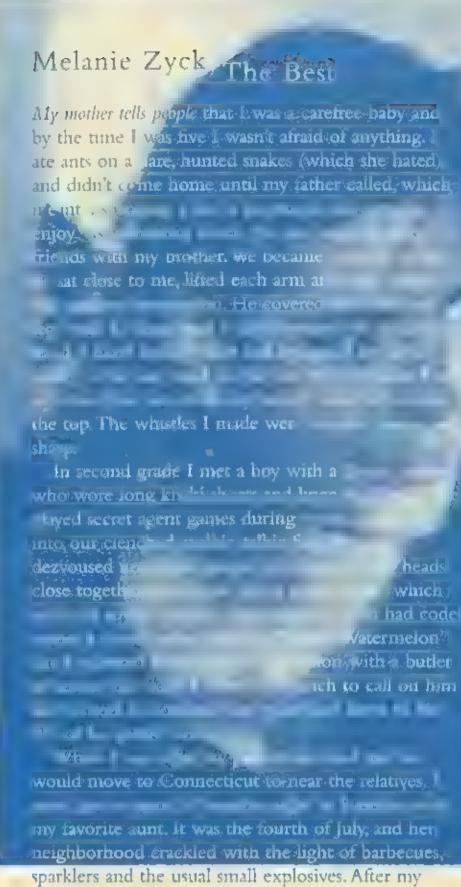












noise and light Babywakers, my brother called them In the morning I dressed in my favorite pink juniper and my aunt took me to mass. I had seen her church only from the family car; angular, modern; it looked unlike any Catholic church I had ever seen. As we sat in a rear pew I watched a family walk up the aisle. There was the father, thick necked and dark. His wife was taller, with bony elbows and a olonde shoulder length hair-do. Behind her was a little girl in light blue frits and lastly an older brother who appeared tall for his age and had hair that fell across his forehead and in the back down to his collar, lush and golden The family chose a pew close to the stark altar. I guessed the boy to be a year or two older than me and my eyes never left him as mass progressed with its droning cadence. Here, I knew, staring at the back of his head, stood the most gorgeous boy that I had ever seen. He resembled Oliver in the movie musical and I was in awe that he never punched or poxed his sister as my brother always did, bored with the predictable service. At one point he even held her hand, looked upon her and smiled. I remembered that morning for years afterwards with a gentle sense of rapture: light coming in through the abstract stained glass, the warm, low pews, the glow of this perfect boy's hair and regret for having to leave my aunt's church. Eventually, this memory faded. It certainly was forgotten by the time my family moved into my grandparents' house in Hamden. I was just sixteen and starting to date, allowed to wear

family drove off she and I gossiped, eating strawber-

ries dipped in sugar before she sent me to bed. I

tried to sleep, agitated by the continuing blasts of

make-up but not yet allowed to drive.

David was also sixteen and without a license. My friend Anne introduced us. She once had a crush on him but when Harry, who drove a muscle car, asked her out it became clear that David really liked me and when Anne 'n' Harry became inseparable, I asked Anne if she would mind much if I came on to her former obsession (she didn't).

The for the reality of David's steamfolling kiss .... with his and I felt teeth, yet no tongue His lips grabbed mine down and pressed hard, his head tilted mine to the left and right. His breath and wetness once we parted. That's some technique, breathed, looking up at the same of the parties of the you gaze up at them after a kiss, it makes them feel all). David grinned as he looked down at me and we kissed like that er the jest of her tell or if the hall between classes, at lunch and again in the stair well. At a certain time, in different parts of the school, we excused ourselves to go to the lav. We met in our stairwell where David made me dizzy with his forceful mouth. Sometimes I countered with light "butterfly wing" kisses as suggested in a book on sex I found once while babysitting. We saw each other every school day until June when Anne 'n' Harry got engaged and friends teased us about hearing wedding bells. David suddenly broke off the relationship citing "other fish in the sea" and the fact that his parents wanted him to go to a prep school come fall. Our last kisses that day were for the first time soft, lingering and truly affectionate. From then on I saw David occasionally and only

From then on I saw David occasionally and only at a distance, although I thought of him constantly. One evening I took a friend to one of his baseball games and we kept our eyes on him as he played. During the second inning his family arrived. I watched them as they cheered him on: his tall, blonde mother, shorter father with graying dark hair and his younger sister. A memory of a perfect boy in my aunt's church rose up in my consciousness and I knew that he had to have been David. Although he was someone I had idolized for years, after that game I thought less and less of him. By freshman year in college I was comforted by how indifferent my feelings were for him. I saw him briefly at a nightclub in New Haven during Christmas break. He didn't recognize me when I first tapped his shoulder but when

he gave me a second look his eyes opened wide and he spurted out my name. At one point in our small talk he said enthusiastically, as if I knew,

"Our kisses were the best!"

I didn't reply. And years later I still cannot decide on the best response At times, what David said comes back to me as I'm sitting quietly, resting my face against my hand. And I find myself kissing that spot near my thumb: absently, softly and with an imperceptible passion.







Pavlovian Response with No Reward Lauren McLean

40229 chapten pral life 140 advonture: prosents end uno tails MISE feldman's Patly on 4's " penmanship CTRATIVE "Wrong " C QSS wrong " SASUALLAUCES Q ,983

too, that means twe ve dark hours. The equator is nice but it does make for monotonous day length. It he day begins with pouring libation, the gods and the white girls start of with the mellows. We flaint our ability to hold our liquor and pass the test. Whatever it was we drank tasted like my grandmother's moonshine. Next a tipsy guided tour of the village in midday heat, it was easily over 105° and cruelly humid. One never ceases to perspire here. Day and night we have that moist glow. It While conditions in Kopeyia seem kinder than in Accra (and most other communities as Kopeyia is considerably better off as seems to be a special place. Because there is a drumming and arts school here that attracts people from all over, the sight of white people is not all that unusual and we can move around without all the attention we got in Accra. The kids here are taken with us but Free of the burdens of electricity of benches lined up outside next to a hut that once electricity comes to Kopeyia will suite y cross our legs. We aren't supposed to eat with our left hands either but that is behause take the next one, never frustrating to a European sensibility and why it is difficult to do business in Africa. 4 To be is in polite terms reclusive back home is coming off as rude here. I find it really difficult to be perpetually for for people who want to converse, and they do, and the children are particularly unnihibited about approaching us. We are a terrific curiosity to their as women the hand thing straight but I've been remiss with the legs. I've done my bit to support the notion of the ugy, rude American, it Again, while Kopeyra is better off there is still no word that describes life here any more accurately than powerty. It is simply a different tevel of poverty is feel uncomfortably wealthy, just think of the Africa you've seen on TV and in seems to be the case with kids wherever we go . The chickets are rubbing those in of course. Get used to the smell of kerosene girl 'cause the sun sets at six and nees at s however, seem to be an expectation for us to mingle and hang out in the village. Gail and Shella are big beer drinkers so they are happy to hang at the bar which is simply a bunch the left hand is used for unsanitary things I will leave to your imagination while the right hand is used for eating, hand shaking and the cleaner things in life. I've managed to keep playing in the dirt. I can't help but feel guilty but at the same time a sort of envy of an unencumbered life strikes me. Not so much the being free of possessions but that the responsibilities are minimal largely focused on food. There is a sort of universal laid back. contact. I seem to do this most often. You know that I'm anti-social to begin with but what who want to weave, Only men in this region weave because it is believed to make women stenie to use a loom. Given the population explosion here I might have suggested that women had better take it up and soon. The fact that four of the five of us are indeed childno one tries to serve us up some cat. They are actually looked upon as food here. To be vegetanan in Ghana is as well as being childless. For some one, ke myself who is so weathy by African standards not to eat meat is truly baffing. Ellie just says she does it for to have become a temporary veg to avoid some of the ess than well cooked organisms one might find in sub-Saharan meat products. Ga. and Shala may be having their doubts. the scene. We're quite fortunate to have our own rooms which are located in a walled complex from which the children are banned. This seemed unnecessarily unpleasant until versation for the kids and the tattoos lead to talk of cats. My 14 cats and 2 dogs seem to them very quirky but it think they believe that I keep them for food so they seem to be a result of attracting outsiders to the drumming and arts school) privacy is still not part of has the ability to get around at night without killing themselves white we grope around in the dark stumbling into holes and tripping over logs both getting to and heaving from the bar it is subthettes of courtesy are still elusive. For some reason we are not supposed attitude, nothing happens on a schedule, things happen when they do yet no one seems fazed when they do not happen quickly or at all it Miss the busitake the next one, never mind that it leaves in two days. Arrange a meeting, no one shows, come by the next day or the next, eventually things get done if they need to I can understand how this can get here sometimes seems so normal and at other times terribly skewed. We are all very were comed but hardly left alone. We must iterally hide away in our rooms to escape human religious reasons which I suppose is more or less accurate for me. Ann, however, seems too after we observed the free range chickens freely ranging through sewage drains. A There appears to be a very well defined sense of which foods should be eaten and what happy for me when I mention them. It is as though I had a good herd of goats I do hope birth control beating the rhythm method hands down. 4 My tattoos offer a topic of conle legs together and this feets like a place I could get a senous case of the happies. It contain a refingerator. For now the beer is at the same 100°+ that everything else is all. There is currently a new moon so this is an prichiblack. Somehow everyone in Kopeyia. assissems to demonstrate that the act of weaving is in fact 80% effective as a form of There does mowes. Clay houses, grass roofs ash pits, kids with torn clothing-if any clothing at a we realized that we would be continuously hassled by the kids otherwise dawned on me that this is a kind of an African Haystack

THE NEWS OF THE WHIRLED \$ 14 DECEMBER 1811

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feers weind that this kindness is in essence bought—just another culture twist. 4 Ann is a funny person I imagine that as alchid she was the sort who asked all kinds of questions, confronting the adults in her life with the ubiquitous "why." She does it still in her own

obviously playing us for whatever they think they can get I know they hope to be getting our cameras, tape recorders or even cash but I know that they will be disappointed. It

killed by kindness in this place, though there is an expectal on that the kindness shown to

n stitches. There must be some national anxiety regarding starch, → We may be

requested nce and beans without the meat sauce we had a. the street vendors in the

one restaurant the waiter respinded with "No that doesn't go

" in the street when we

goes together. Somet mes they just won I give you a mear if hey fee, that what you ve asked for is not a complete or acceptable selection. When I ordered not and a yam at

result in some reward. This is another reason I find it difficult to spend time being

sociable, I know that something is expected of me but I'm not sure what. The kids are

the rest of us might be embarrassed to take a photo or tak to someone she doesn't have such inh bitions. I'm not sure she's aware that it may not always seem polite and often we

see some confused tooking people at the receiving end but she always asks good ques tooks and 1, for one, like having the answers. I do suspect that Ellie finds this embarrassian

might have found awkward to ask yet we are always happy that she has done so. While

She is always the one to ask questions the rest of us may not have thought of or

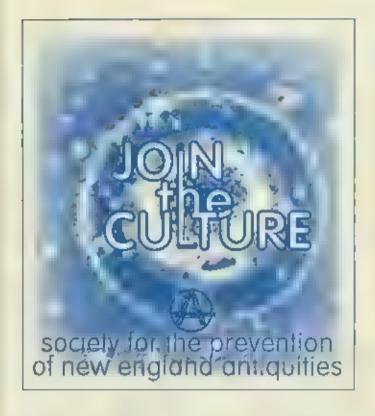


The theorist's world is a world of the best people and the worst of possible results.

-Ted Taylor, former designer of muclear weapons NO CHAOS, DAMN IT.

- Jackson Pollock, artest

"IT WAS EITHER DETECTIVE WORK OR ART HISTORY," jokes independent curator Richard Yelling, "I chose art history because the criminals there make Listing resunumon. Behand the historian's humor hes a truthuncovering the meaning and origin of an art work frequently requires the same evidentiary methods employed by the police. "It's all clues, inferences, establishing opportunity and motive. Yelling explains. "mothing is ever as it seems." While readers may be tanniliar with such undertakings as the Rembrandt Project, the art of this century also requires occasional sleuthing. Though heavily documented, contemporary art encompasses an enormous volume of works produced by tens of thousands of arusts worldwide. A great deal of artistic activity in out-of-the-way places (i.e., outside of New York City) is frequently over



RECEIVER \*\* SENDER

it's more than knowing the notes



there just happened to be making the trip out to Kopeyia on Thursday, can she tag along? but for the most part I think that the Chanaians we are meeting understand that we are especially about stuff like religion and spiritual beliefs that adults might be more closed about. The only problem is that African English is difficult to understand due to the strong treats her adventure as a normal way of going about things. I think I would have cried and coming to Ghana appears to be to get to a Kopeyia is really rather remarkable. She was supposed to fly in to Accra on Sunday Fillic was connected to the Cultural Centre in Accra and some one from So E a just seemed to shrug it off. Next thing embassy people were clueless as to our whereabouts but somehow some one knew of have to hear French spoken. I'm having a terrible time getting Remad me to buy stock in pharmaceuticals. The only hitch to these antibiotiris is Embassy where she assumed we had registered, to find out where we were. The Glenda appears in Kopeyra, three hours east of Accra. She had missed her Sunday caught the next available fight on Wednesday, and got herself to the the drumming going on here at the school but it goes on all over, all the time. Rhythmic because she has picked up a lot of savvy attitude about being white in Africa and she nto she had on Glenda was a flight and her name. No bought a plane ticket home. A You'll be pleased to know I've had my first solid stool adventure and throws herself into situations I'd be terrified of Her finding her way odwin went to meet her and waited 'till all the days fights had come in, but no So Glenda arrives. I imagine that she was abie to navigate through her trip out here phone number, no way of contacting the girl's mother in the states who had made shakes from the anti-maiana, tablets. \* We have a new addition to our I'm getting used to not feeling quite nght, it's either a churr ng past her name, which is Glenda. My first reaction is to put on my mentioned the amazing soundirack we've got going more or less girls. A very young woman studying at RISD spending a year in

playing with

over to the act of perspiration. It is doing wonders for my skin. That winter in New England cracked foot syndrome is altogether gone. I hesitate to fook in a mirror, i'm sure that like a, the other pale people, we seen I have a perfectly hidebus case of pizza face. It is am facility, for if I had keeled over some kind soul might eventually discover my body flattened into the waste and hauf me the her out of there and in the worst case, had Satan actuary reached through the vile orrice in the floor to slide me away through it I might have saved gain her wealth, 🛧 I fee. like a big old greasebal. I ve never in my life given as much time collection of languages in Ghana, so that without the English, Ghanarans would have trou feverish enough to feer cold in this heat and had ma wearing all the clothes I brought with were open and that I was in full view of the other women so sadiy possessed to use this communicating with each other. Never mind that the boundaries of Ghana rather than where, the fufu, the fruit, playing with runny-nosed children, drinking, handling dead replanguage groups are by far the more artificial structures in dark stench-ridden concrete stall with a hole in the floor that no one knows nor ought to before I stepped into it by mistake. I also found myself grateful for the fact that the stars hadn't been to school, so there is actually a language barrier with many of the adults. 🛧 he can afford to support, but in the case of a wealthy white woman he would expect to was convinced, in my mild state of delinum, that it led straight to my not eating meat is that so far I am the only one to have gotten it with some the wintry things I boarded the plane with Whatever this bug was it can bowels of hell and felt immense gratitude that my eyes adjusted to the darkness myself by grasping at the ankles of passers-by. → This disease could have catch, largely for financial reasons. The usual thing is for a overing from the deadly disease I knew I've had a couple of marriage offers

is so much a part of the blood flow. 4 There are mound building term tes altempting to be misery and death ifound myself enraged. As Ann pressed her to tell us where this was to of most of them. The dogs just seem to ay in the dus. The humans too live a hard, hungry, le but my sym. aturday right on the town. We went to the big city (a.k.a. the nearest town with in sience after hurnedly finishing the meal and then I went and felt guilty sounds with drums, singing, even pre-dawn town oner sounds, celebrations aling place of sounds and dren's singing against drums and out high the beginning of school drumming in thur, hill pathles are with those who have the fewest options. If The town oner is out passing the myself for not standing firm with my bollet that an Someone shot a Polaroid of Elie and me, I found it too confusing to look at my mage I don't brush my hair and it looks puffy thanks to the humidity. My lack of color is really unpleasant in comparison to the people who live here. I' be happy never to see myserf essing with her bidhday Teven approprised though I turned out Hadn't caused Glenda is having a b rthday creative on the walls of my room. Lovery + I have no idea what I look like anymore. tomorrow and to celebrate she is getting a goat. My first thought, in fact, an mas here Iruy box so aw know that I and wound up in a bar featuring pict any evidence of meation the bodies of most of them for lack of stamina to do mu, hields. The homans too ing roulette and driving drunk. It was a special place.

stretch) and refer to her as the Good Witch of the North arrangements with Eilie in the first piece



looked

It was while researching one of these side-roads in the art world that Yelling stumbled across what may be the most daring work of the century—if not all time. He may also have uncovered the most daring crime.

Yelling had undertaken a research project that had him combing the files of a defunct state art agency. While cataloguing unsuccessful fellowship applications. he came across a submission from the 1980's by a "Norma Spinrad." It included a work entitled "Michael Heizer Meets Jean Tinguely Under the Supervision of J. Robert Oppenheimer." The artist claused to have completed a work in the early 1970's which involved constructing a small nuclear deviceand detonating it before an audience of invited guests. Yelling immediately took the proposal to be a prank. "It's a watty fusion of some extreme and violent art: happenings, earthworks, and dynamic sculpture. Plus political statement and technology. It's kind of a synopsis of 20th century art." As Yelling read further, his amisement was replaced with a growing horror. "This person knew a lot about building these things. She had a detailed inventory of materials needed and how to get them, along with a listing of declassified technical documents." Despite its matter-of-fact tone and detailed dopporermaton, Y. Yukhng visualistikuntesingsning then is an embhhoratus a seld be avaluded this upopion ionligh high tribé thropposphostilisalisas pasgumaner détailocu f the statement ditte suptessful attempt.

While never precisely identifying the actual location for this "performance," documentation included before-and-after photographs of the site, a description of the individuals witnessing the event- and a small, carefully packaged vial of dirt. Yelling tested the soil and found it to be, as claimed, radioactive. "I was assured that the level of radioactivity was far beyond anything natural, and inconsistent with industry." Yelling says,"I became convinced that it happened just as the proposal claimed. The blast didn't necessarily have to be this devastating conflagration. A 'fizzle yield' would fit the criteria of a nuclear detonation and produce the stated results."

Since then, Yelling has been on a search for the true identity of Norma Spiarad, any of the participants/witnesses, and the site of the blast. Spinrad proved to be a pseudonym but Yelling believes certain aspects of "her" resume to be real. He has also been investigating incidences of higher than normal cancer rates and unexplained explosions in rural areas. Eventually, Yelling believes, he'll catch a break "Someone will recognize the area in the photos or I'll find an entire artists' community that died of lymphatto cancer. The intensity of Yelling's search reflects his desire to verify his findings...and something more pressing. "This person, after incredible effort, pulled it off—then was named down for a fellowship. Arists don't take rejection very well. A Caravagago with nuclear capability is something to keep you awake nights."





# Melle Schleding (15

work of my choosing at home and do it as taught while I'm here. It will do me good to parrate men who hover over us to catch us in mistakes, I have the good fortune to be at a lidom with few problems so I'm managing to look halfway competent which seems to be to the surprise of Marconi, the instructor who appears to be assigned to me. It Ellie really are pushy about connecting with us harbor hopes of getting some variable gift upon our departure or make a connection in the U.S. We did bring with us T-shirts, school supplies, it e toys etc. to distribute to them but we're very aware that the main motive is to part us the teenage boys, the girls are not so aggressive as to engage in this game. The kids who America and hitting it big. I suppose that's one way to escape village intern Africa He seems to be lacking in emotional connections but I hesitate to let him feel any ties with me Dest of inding god. Sive it be bringing us to church with her on Sunday. She gives us something to talk about. It get a lot of time to worry about Bill, is he snowed in? Are the something to talk about. It is the house still standing? Is my mother having him over for home cook. saga confinues. She had to xill it herself and she very nearly canned it but thought that if she is to be a meat eater she should know the experience of killing. There's something to help but feet that she often acts too impulsively and is making a few bunders. I don't want \* I me in the weaving village passes easily. Two more work days remain for us. Two Some members of our group are more worked up about this than others. I'll just finish the It leaves a bitter taste → A kid named Reuben has seriously latched himself business). At some point the kids become more or less self sufficient and hang with deal of physical contact between parents and children beyond the nursing stage. I don't see this as a physically demonstrative culture at all but given the vast quantities of children being born firm sure that something's going on. You don't even see teenagers or couldren grandmother in Kopeyia while his parents live in Denu a few miles away I suspect that he know that it's rec procal, when it becomes manipulated into obugation it is pointiess as an exchange It's rec procal, when seems like a sad boy, I can't begin to fix his situation. He's that she seemed to be looking for and she may have even ruffled a few village feath more days remaining in which to become master weavers. The men who are teaching us seem guite exasperated. Most of us have done a good bit of weaving and know the dents and teachers around this. Our instructors are considered master weavers and very for themselves, so Glenda wasn't exactly getting the authentic Kopeyia celebration experi most spirited loving energy I have ever encountered. She hardly speaks any English at a the most alive person I have ever made contact with. She sings, gives herself generously should have researched this better. For one, she's not a weaver and doesn't really see if because after four days I will never see him again. It Most of these kids seem content to has been hanging around Africa for a white and she's good at getting around, but I can't but she has connected to our group so easily and we're all totally in love with her. She is (he's one of our weaving teachers) and I suspect they are able to have jobs here basics of it all, but what our teachers are accustomed to is an apprenticeship system in because they are friends but we believe that Ellie, and consequently we, are being taken from as much cash as possible. They learn early. A little goes a long way here so we are pate in a totally different method of learning which really consists of four amused and not talking about a great deal but I really hate being looked upon that way and have people profess friendship only to get material goods out of me. I can understand completely other kids. This seems to work for the methers since by the time the first ohidren are off some one from the village may have been manipulated into covering some of the cost. Also as it turns out, the locals don't do goat. They raise goats for market but not to eat praise and tell us we're beautifu.' Who couldn't thrive on such magic? That must be the Few people will give friendship without some expectation of something, be it physica or needs his parents more than he or his fam ly knows. Maybe he just needs a hug, maybe with their peers one or two more babies may have come along. It didn't notice a great us and let their presence be known in the hopes that they " get something at the school because Godwin runs it (and much of the village, for better or worse). Patience opens up with us, we none of the adults do I can't help but be taken away by where their attitude comes from and I can't blame them, they are kids, but it still digs at us but Reuben also seems to need some adult attention and love, He lives with his workshop is completely bizarre to them. For us to come to the point of doing our fully from either side. She also pretty much acts on Godwm's advice and he generally works in his own interest, not in Ellie's, his employees' or ours, We've learned that any onto me. Many of the children here have done so with one or another of us. It is mainly There is a woman named Patience who helps with the cooking and cleaning and sime own design work in two weeks is foreign to them. There's a bit of friction between stutheir minds we need to spend years simply observing and assisting. The idea of a two me, and Godwin is no better I get this sense from many (not all, by any means) of our he's just using his sad eyes to mess with my mind. The parental connections here are interesting. Babies are constantly attached to mom until they are able to get around on contacts here that they are simply looking to hustle us. + Friendship and tokens to acknowledge it are often delicate I see a great deal of importance in such exchanges emotional, in return, But I like a sense of sincerity and I like to give from the heart and her, she'll dance in with our breaklast, sing a few words to Jehovah, raise her arms in actuit happens to be handy does whatever a parent needs to do (that "village raising a their own. At that age they seem to benefit from communal parenting where whatever present her as insensitive, she has her sweet side but there are things she can be American Friend" can offer him Perhaps he has fantasies of being adopted away to involved may be a large amount which she claims not to have. Ellie is concerned that kely see our behavior as a challenge to their experience (a bunch of women at that) She's married to Godwin's brother dumb about. The goat thing is over, I just hope she doesn't feel the need to share, that, \* The politics of her decision to celebrate herself are convoluted. The money a pathetic, bug eyed, awkward sixteen year old looking for that lucky break only an thing he tells her is to be taken with a lack of trust on our part it is uncomfortable ers. She can be very obtivious while cialming to be in tune with the local scene to her god ishels ciever and pleasingly beautiful

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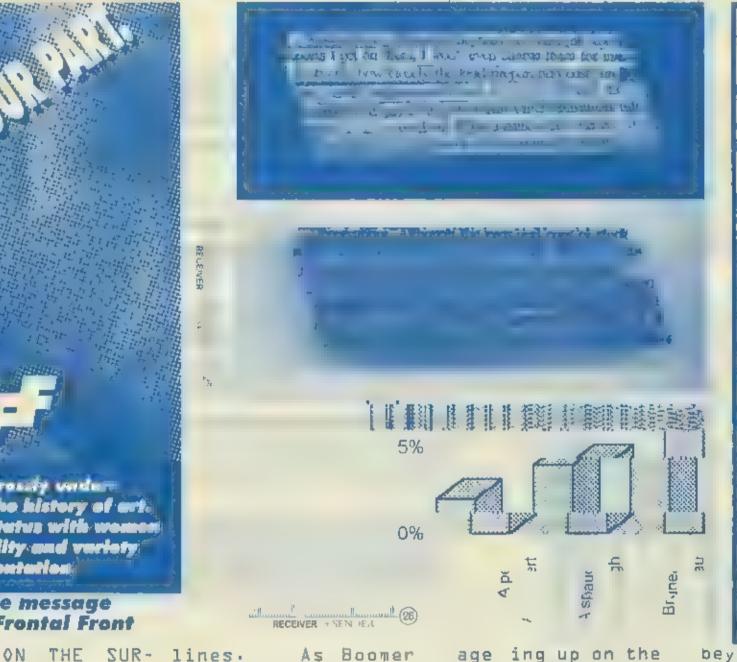


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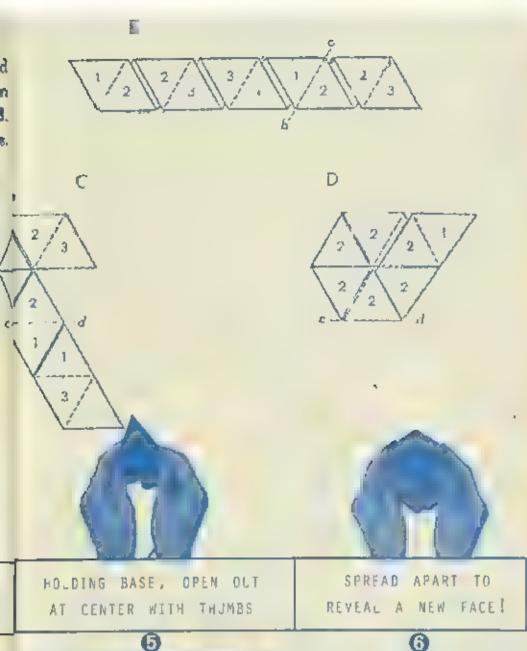
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수 rampant it's a shame because these guys proved up to each other, → The toughest was Gabrine →te th Things went well when he realized I was serious wherever we were to go that day. We got annoyed because we didn't feel the need to our process and exasperated by now. We really turned then saw our sincere assures us that crime is minimal but we often seem to be escorted kid works under a mas be thinking. "Who do these women think they are?" They think they can weave after one week?" Actually most of its could like did show them a bit about our process an own looms and they She was constantly yanking his chain and playing it e gains protected from but it makes me wonder about how comfortable and sefe! was pretty grouchy from the start but once we got to weaving and he Now and then he apprent.ceship concept on its ear, Normally what happens is a women blow in, all wanting oom time on group left shortly after I did with Gabriel but Agbeko got informed of our departure and as the designated drunkar sense of and bad communit to be pretty cool ance we as warmed technique but mis



## Ghana Diary

pl the end and he was as battled as anyone . Few was Annis main in the other Shaws the paractical value anatom of most closely in the master apprentice relationship. She was the cuty one of only the persons of so and been ing before and he had her weaving yard after yard, how ering over her to be sure she did it right. Eventuary she for years, and reseased freezest straig accordance and second off to photograph women at work for her last few days of class but things worked out well between she and Felix and he went on to use the cloth she wove in some clothing he made -> The hovering as education phenomenon is a little unnerving. These men are always around walting for us to make mistakes so they could help correct them. I a ways considered it a great compiment when they left me with my dom to weave without supervision it must be understood that they take their roles very seriously and it must have been terribly disruptive for them to have five spoiled white women breeze in to weave as a lark. They may never want Americans in their midst again. > Alone is a concept unknown to Ghana, there is always some one about Some of us give a good deal of time to list hiding out in our uxumous single rooms. (Yes: Privacy sijust an unknown-with so many people suppose it would be difficult i am looking forward to rafting around in my big house with my cats and not being chased down by nguisitive children calling "Cella, Cella" A lot us are starting to feel squeezed. It is good that we all get along with nour group. I really like everyone imhere with and , hope to keep up the friendships., >> Patience took Ann, Glenda and me to her church. These were the Pentecostal, drumming speaking in tongues folks and t was a complete wow. You haven't lived til you ve amened and have ujahed at a party for god -> The trow trow is something. have not yet braved and actually hope not to. It is one of those death trap humanity. packed vehicles that one would feel at risk in. The size of a mini-van with a rack on top that easily carries twice the volume of the interior of the vehicle, how this stuff is loaded is beyond me. These trow trows remain parked unti full to capacity and then some, meaning that body upon body is wedged together until somebody decides that there are enough people and parcers loaded up to justify moving along. And move along they do at speeds exceeding sanity. And as if to leave safe passage completely in the hands of fate they have phrases such as "God's will be done" painted on them. This is something I do not trust. → What a scene yesterday, our final full day in the weaving virage. Much of it was spent distributing small gifts and ciothing to the kids who have been hanging around. They in turn continue to hit us up for cameras, tape players etc. One doesn't want to regard them as little ingrates but I'm not (none of our group is) comfortable with this. For one it's the great big Ghanahustre. They have so little, we have so much, what can we expect but for kids to be kids and to try to get out of us what they can. Besides, everyone here is out to get something from us it's nothing new Part of our discomfortiles in 1) We thought weld be helping with the stuff we brought it is in lact hadequate and other tems. might have been more useful-perhaps items for the school that might have been used communally by all the children 2) We were mostly hanging with the push est

house where the second have a bit of wearing to sell or their parents work for Godwin. Our concerns were with the children from neighboring communities with their distanced ballies, whose diet is meager and unvaried. We thought in retrospect that the clothing might have gone to a church or a school where it could have been distributed to those most in need 3) We really hate to perpetuate this deal that Americans come and leave expensive gifts it just leels weild it sure doesn't help mach here. What would help the economy is some birth contror + Il bet a lot of these kids are a ming to get the helt out of this village. can't say it this will help or hinder Americans with cameras are inspiring some major fantasies and I think a lot of these young people want to connect with us for the possibility of using us as sponsors as a ticket to the J.S. Shella was actually approached by one young boy and his family to sponeor him and to pay for his aducation in the same. We asked a growing admired force is to not get involved in the gift giving and to make it clear to the kids from the start that no gifts are coming. Glanda did this and no one treated her any worse for t That's the kids, the adults were a different scene Godwin held a reception to include the weavers, our driver ourselves and the kitchen help alas the kitchen help was having to engage in just that during the reception.) The whole event was staged so that everyone more get three time and gittle those was the same ways in made things easier for us by providing a forum in which to express our appreciation but it was solobyious. We gave them gifts of clothing and Ellie tipped them hope. they were all satisfied, but these were the people (though no less deserving) who were employed I know there were people needing spare clothing more than they did Poitcs, t's all who knows Godwin + We wonder if Ellie has a misguided view of all this she wants so much to help the Ghanaians and to do something to boost their economy while preserving the indigenous art, but I sense that she is being taken advantage of. Her relationship with Godwin has us puzzied. [End of Part 1.]

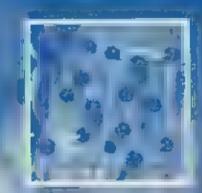




what is real, and what is not real need we ask anyone to tell us these things?

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#### THE READERS RESPOND



EMIGRE MAIL

#### Dear Emigre,

Keep up the great work, Emigre! I have been getting your magazine for two years and I love it. I was sad to see your large format downsize Oh well, change is good. Thanks.

Chris Keeney, AOL

#### Dear Emigre,

I have been meaning to write you about this for the longest time: I was browsing through the magazines at my local Tower Records over the summer and what should I come across but the House Industries issue of *Emigre*. This would not have struck me as odd if it had not been on the shelf with the car/truck magazines. Guess no one told them that it was a design magazine. Maybe you should include a warning label on any future issues with "confusing" covers.

#### Dear Emigre,

Sean DeYce, Internet

I had my first issue of Emigre purchased for me by my wife's cousin, because her cousin is lucky enough to live in a state where a magazine shop will carry your-much-envied-byme publication. The cousin is from Mew Mex-1co (your typo, not mine). I'm in Utah and have decided that no. 19 is just not enough and I need more. I very much appreciate the commitment to type, layout, content and exploration of the like that your group has shared, published, etcetera. At least the bookstores carry your book. Tomorrow I'll be getting my company to shell out money and get me a few subscriptions, and of course Emigre is the first on my list. Talk to you folks tomorrow. Thanks Shaun Tullis, Internet

#### Dear Emigre,

I finally decided to send you some comments, and, I hope, some intelligent ones.

Something infuriated me: the letter [in Emigre no. 40] from my Brazilian neighbor Joana Ventura, and her silly statement "You are telling nothing." She isn't the first one to tell me that Emigre is saying nothing — a statement that I totally disagree with. Let me explain.

I have been collecting Emigre, including back issues, with pleasure. Sure, I would like to see those big issues back again, but on the other band, they would never arrive intact at my home in Brazil. So the size is good now. A clever marketing strategy — small is effective and offers great portability and salability.

Also. I have seen hundreds of Brazilian advertising agencies use Emigre fonts everywhere. It's funny to open a magazine, watch TV, read a newspaper or even walk on the streets and see big billboards featuring Emigre fonts. It's a pastime of mine to identify all the Emigre typefaces and those cute names you give them for my friends. If you are saying nothing, why does everybody use your typefaces?

Publishing companies also get inspiration from Emigre Some Brazilian teen magazines change their visuals twice a year, and they always use Emigre-inspired designs. If you are saying nothing, why do they copy you so eagerly? Surely it has a purpose – you must be saying something!

Brazilian MTV does the same thing. What we see in Emigre first later becomes some vignette and/or ad for an MTV program. Brazilian MTV has no creative verve. but is marvelous when it comes to transforming trash into beautiful Emigre-style creations using tons of Zuzana Licko's typefaces. Sometimes they use what I define as "hybrid design," changing from difficult to read David Carson, to sturdy and strong Neville Brody-inspired designs. I love the colorful The Face/Arena big lettering animations (almost old fashioned, as if we have never lived in the 80s). Also, I think they have recently acquired Emigre no. 29, the Designers Republic issue, since they are trying to make ads that look like Japanese comics, or they say "I saw a bubble gum package yesterday and I will reproduce it using my Mac. How creative I am!" If you aren't saying anything, why is the information that Emigre publishes so eagerly devoured and regargitated into our culture? I do believe that the great oxymoron that should be ringing a bell inside my Brazilian friends' minds is "How come you are saying nothing when it is obvious that you are telling/ giving us everything (ideas/typefaces) that is

nothing when it is obvious that you are telling/giving us everything (ideas/typefaces) that is important to us?" When are people going to admit that *Emigre* is a source of inspiration? Thank you *Emigre*, and keep up the great work.

Thank you Emigre, and keep up the great w Your Brazilian subscriber, Fabio Bertolozzi, Internet

#### Dear Emigre,

I can't help but comment on the letter by Joana Ventura that appeared in your last issue. Like in many other letters I've read in past is sues of *Emigre*, we have another complaint about the contents of your magazine. That's really not new. Actually, I believe the preface for *Emigre* 39 was mainly addressed to these readers: "I'm aware of my audience's dislike of reading matter," you said.

Let's say this is not fair. Maybe Joana Ventura likes to "read," but she found out that Emigre's discourse is empty. "You're telling nothing," she wrote, and she felt the need to put it in Portuguese because in English this probably sounds like nonsense. At first glance we could

imagine the poor girl can't read English very well (or wasn't she able to recognize characters, words and sentences in the pages of the magazine?). But I've heard the same kind of comment from someone who teaches English and wasn't able to capture any meaning from an Emigre article he was trying to translate.

"Are there any new ideas?" she asks, after having read the review "The angel is my floating point," and some other articles. Is it possible that she read so many articles, essays and reviews on Throwing Apples at the Sun that now she can't stand it anymore? I don't believe so. So this is not the point

I believe the point is that Emigre has been turning its attention more and more to the theoretical issues of graphic design language, and that's exactly where the new ideas are. In doing so, a new language for design theory and criticism has to be created. Like any new language, it's not very stable and maybe not very clear. And very easily dismissed as nonsense. Priscila Fanas, Sao Paulo, Brazil.

#### Dear Emigre,

I've been reading Emigre for a few years now, and you've published a number of letters saying, essentially, that lately you've had too many words and not enough pictures.

I can sympathize, because, after all, graphic designers may be presumed to be as much interested in Graphics as Design. But I admire your attempt to fill two black holes at once: the lack of a real world yet uncompromising graphics mag, and also of a high-minded-yet-not-entirely-academic design journal.

As a composer and songwriter, I know that when it comes to Music vs. Words, music always wins; and as any major tabloid will tell you, when it's Pictures vs. Words, pictures always win. But in graphic design, as with children's books, it's a much fairer and therefore more interesting struggle

My best to both sides of your brains, Eric Grunin, Internet

#### Dear Emigre,

Hi, this is Gaston — an avid reader of your magazine. I just wanted to make a small point after reading your opening essay for *Emigre* 39. On page 9 there is an interesting remark made on David Carson's work. I would like to give my take on the subject.

The paragraph I am referring to goes some thing like this: "To justify his typographic ærobics on the page, Carson often refers to the changing habits of the audience and borrows from the theory that if you engage the readers and make them work at decoding the text, they will better remember what they read. Granted, it did take me quite a bit of work to figure out that the sentences in the essay needed to be read from bottom to top. But what I end up remembering about the essay is not so much what I read, but how difficult it was to read at all "It then goes on with a remark made by Andrew Blauvelt.

I believe the theory borrowed by Carson rarely works. Creating interference between the

CONTINUED ON LAST PAGE

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Star, September 10, 1996
Editor in Chief Phil Bunton
Creative Director: Kevin Corbett

## TRUT

#### THE STAR, THE GLOBE

and the Missing (H) in the

### NEW

#### VERACITY

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DANIEL X. O'NEIL

My favorite magazines are Star and Globe and I'm not going to hide it anymore. With bright retail colors and big pictures of beautiful people doing marvelous things, the tabloids are where I go for pure graphic love.

Two recent developments have slipped me deeper into the color tabloids: their uncanny ability to break major stories and the fact that I fell in love. Before I met my fiancée, some would say I cared more about geopolitics than people. Now I know how good it is to revel in love like yellow flowers nestled in a red meadow.

But the real gold of the tabloids is trut. Trut is the mutable concoction of facts employed for an ulterior purpose. Trut consists of exactly 4/s of the stuff of truth. Four out of five letters lined up as a reasonable facsimile of the truth.

Here at the end of the millennium, consumers of communication are adept at trading in these fractional representations of reality. Everyone prepares particular visions of the truth for different people. We all in turn take everyone else's trut and calibrate it to our own understandings. The missing H dœsn't bother us a bit. With \% of the truth and some sense, people manage to get along.

THE RISE OF TRUT

Imperfect truth is not new. White lies and misinformation have been around as long as families and war. What is new is the widespread acceptance of customized falsehood.

In 1974 when Nixon lost his job, the country fell under what I call the tyranny of the smoking gun. After that, whenever there was a scandal, the question was "What did he know and when did he know it?" This red-handed attitude came with the rise of investigative

journalism. The problem is that this system plays right into the hands of those in power. As long as they can hide the weapon, they can get away with whatever they want, no matter how much of the evidence points to them.

Take the example of a guy named Ronald Reagan. He managed to stay unimpeached by keeping one step removed from the smoking gun. He and his lackeys committed some of the most heinous acts of cunning ever performed against the United States Constitution. They cut a deal with the Ayatollah Khomeni to keep hold of the Teheran Embassy hostages until Reagan had beaten poor Jimmy Carter. They financed a sickening war in Nicaragua by selling crack cocaine to U.S. minorities. They took the traditional Washington sport of white-collar robbery to obscene heights with the Savings & Loan Scandal and the subsequent Resolution Trust Corporation bailout. And on and on. He got away with everything, and we all know it.

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#### WHAT TRUT HATH WROUGHT

This is not just an American phenomenon. Governments all over the world are regularly shown to be run by corrupted phreaks who do everything from rob us blind to fondle our children to kill us outright. Each of these governments is invariably propped up by newspapers, rv and other media that proclaim that the Government is full of a bunch of good guys looking out for us. Trut is the direct product of the chafing that occurs when popular perception of reality doesn't jibe with the dominant version of reality. Instead of trying to prove the existence of an absent gun, trut looks at the plainly visible and encourages logical conclusions.

The media often tries to ameliorate lost credibility with the use of irony and satire. NBC gives us Saturday Night Live, where they make fun of the power but "never go too far," as George Bush once said approvingly, standing next to Dana Carvey at a White House press conference. Irony and satire are lazy and defeatist. Trut-making is earnest and probing.

Trut can be a violent phenomenon. One of the most advanced cases of a society trying to bring the dominant trut closer to the facts was the Los Angeles Rebellion of 1992. The citizens of LA knew that the Rodney King verdict delivered in Simi Valley was severely flawed. There was an overpoweringly widespread feeling that no amount of op/ed page copy or letters to the editor could change. So they took to the streets and let the world in on their trut: cops shouldn't get away with beating the shit out people for no good reason.

The rebellion marked a turning point in the rise of trut. The Simi Valley jurors had a smoking gun (amateur videotape) and still refused to convict because they were holding on to their own trut. Their trut was that the cops are good. And that African-Americans — even prostate, pummeled African-Americans surrounded by a dozen hyped up cops — are a threat. And the tyranny of the smoking gun went down in flames.

I'm not saying that the tabloids are radical revolutionaries leading the way to a government of the people, by the people, for the people. But they are trailblazers in the methodology of trut. Instead of making up constrictive rules for themselves that only impede their ability to discover reality, they accept official dishonesty and embrace it.

Tabloids like Star and Globe are leading practitioners in a new standard for honesty, and they don't deserve to be held out with two fingers like a stinky rag. The tabloids diligently seek out the 80% of facts that are discernible even when people like Reagan are doing their best to hide the H on them. They make up the rest through careful analysis of what they discovered. Then they present the result as if it were Gospel.

The point is that this isn't thin air. The quotes are completely made up but they seem to represent something true. The quotes end up being what the person would have said had they been honest and if they had actually spoken to the reporter who wrote the story.

Trut is like people — there are a lot of mean ones out there. Tabloids use the underhanded method of vague attribution. Of course whatever tabloids say a certain person said, only serves to buttress the trut laid out in the article. It also tends to expose the position from which a trut has sprung A good example is from the Globe article called "X-Files Gillian Anderson Red-Hot Lover — at 15." The article profiles Ralph Wallace, a former boyfriend of the actress. They wrap up the story this way: "...but he says he'll always have a warm spot for Gillian and loves watching her as Agent Dana Scully on the X-Files."

He never said that. I know Ralph Wallace. Ralph Wallace is a friend of mine. Ralph Wallace has produced a number of my verse dramas here in Chicago. Ralph Wallace does not like the X-Files that much. Globe only said he said that because it serves the article's trut, which is that Gillian Anderson has a nutty-goofy background, and she's really-really a nutty wild girl, and that is just one more reason why everyone in the world should watch her show on Fox Network. This is trut according to Gillian Anderson's agent and Rupert Murdoch, and that warm spot is going to be in their jeans when they read the overnight Nielsens. Trut everywhere.

#### SUCKERS

Probably the biggest news broken by the tabloids lately is a story the Star reported last August about presidential strategist Dick Morris. Here's the lead from Richard Gooding's article called Top Clinton Aide And The Sexy Call Girl: "President Clinton's top political adviser has hired a call girl almost weekly for a year — and after kinky sex has revealed the innermost secrets of the White House. While the illicit pair sprawl naked, the trusted aide takes frequent phone calls from the Oval Office and even holds the phone up to the call girl's ear so she can eavesdrop on the president's private conversations — without Clinton ever knowing it.

"'He gets a kick of me listening in', Washington call girl Sherry Rowlands tells Star in an

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exclusive interview."

So we've got a short married guy with a foot fetish next to a prostitute on one line and on the other line we've got the President of the United States next to the guy holding the freakin' nuclear launch codes in a black suitcase. Now that's a story.

First they lay out the bona fides of Ms. Rowlands: "She gave up a shot at modeling and acting to get married at 19, and had several children. But after 14 years the marriage broke up. Two years ago, she signed on with an escort service for the first time, aiming to make enough money to start a business cleaning homes and offices."

So Star is broadcasting the fact up front that they are telling the story from the point of view of Ms. Rowlands. After all, this is a popular magazine — there are a lot more aspiring model/actresses, young mothers, divorcees, call girls, entrepreneurs, and cleaning ladies reading Star than there are Presidents of the United States. I think they hit a good part of their demographic right there.

Star also takes the time to lay out their own legitimacy. They run a profile on the "Star Reporter Who Investigated the Scandal." He used to be a copy boy at the New York Times.

The amazing thing about this trut is how quickly its radical core of facts was absorbed into the dominant media. Network pundits and political strategists folded the story into the overwhelming tableau of hours and hours of uncut content provided by the President, his operatives, and the cozy  $\tau v$  execs whose hopes and dreams are all wrapped up in keeping the Executive Branch up and moving well, keeping the wars won.

The sad thing about trut is how it de-moralizes culture and boils down world visions to a cold calculus of individual loss and gain. It doesn't really matter who plays footsie with whom or who's carrying out genocide on whom or who stole the elections. As long as the Fed keeps interest rates low, or as long as the baby sleeps through the night, or as long as the stock market keeps rising, or as long as the cops don't come for them, people will keep their mouths shut and go along with whatever's handed down. And we can bundle ourselves up in tailor-fit coats of trut and steel ourselves against whatever comes next.

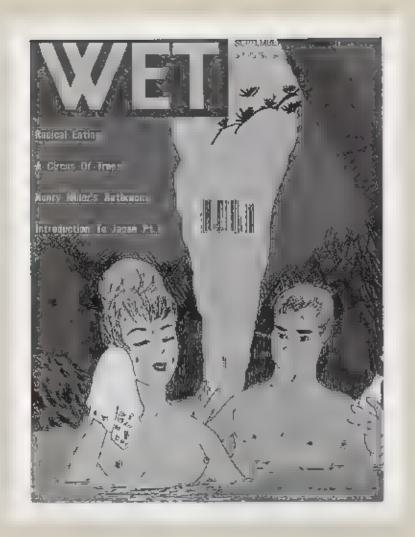
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**Globe,** September 24, 1996 Editor: Tony Frost Design Editor: Colin Jenkins 第64条



Wet, September/October, 1981 Editor Lewis MacAdams Design Bill Womack, Wippo, Kathy Hilburn Illustration: Terry Yumura

#### Wet and Me

Two awful things happened when I sat down with my precious pile of nine Wets. I have kept them for 17 years now, carefully packing and moving them no less than ten times, but never rereading them for fear of finding out that they were stupid, dull, and hopelessly Nu Wave. Wet changed my life when I was 19 and ready to have my life changed. I have no idea how the first copy got in my hands. Here's what I can reconstruct:

It was 1980. Columbus, Ohio. Smack in the middle of my "beat" — a strip of High Street I walked several times a day, everyday — there was a telephone pole. On that pole was stapled a medium sized stiff cardboard poster that said, "GET WET."

Now, cut to me in my tiny apartment. I have purchased a copy of Wet. I'm showing it to my boyfriend, Greg, who thinks I'm very cool for finding such a gold mine of hep. He holds it eagerly.

I honestly don't remember reading any of it, but I suppose I did. I think I took it with me on the bus to work, looking at it and letting a warm wave of understanding wash over me: Nancy, there are people out there who are not afraid. They have arms and legs and breasts and penises like people in Columbus, but somehow... they're not like us. These Wet people put 50 fresh squids on their naked bodies in the design of an evening gown. They take photographs of small, planned explosions. They're... you know, interesting.

Soon, Greg and I moved to San Francisco, swinging by Los Angeles in hopes of shopping at shops we'd seen advertised in Wet.

So, as I held the yellowing stack of Wets on my lap, the stakes were high. Would my Wet love hold?

The answer is, of course, complicated, and discussed below. The two horrible and personally embarrassing things I didn't expect to find out were that:

- 1. Nancy's Magazine is a big fat Wet rip off! Wet had a power issue (Sept./Oct. 1980). N'sM had a power issue (Spring 1987). (CRINGE) Wet took themes and playfully danced around them. N'sM attempts to do the same. I can only flinch by the phone waiting for their lawyers to call.<sup>1</sup>
- 2. I subscribed to Wet, but Wet wrote for Greg! I open it, and it's filled with Greg's

#### [ Wet At A Glance ]

- Thirty four Wets exist, beginning with the May/June 1976 issue and closing out with Nov/Dec. 1981.
- Editor Leonard Koren, based in Venice, California, worked on Wet alone for the first year and a half before he was joined by three friends
- The subtitle, "The Magazine of Gourmet Bathing," was (remarkably) an actual focus throughout most issues.
- Sample of themes that put out a tight rope for articles to tippy-toe across; Obsession (July/Aug. 1978), Dry Love (Jan/Feb. 1979), Food (May/June 1979), Interior Spaces (March/April 1980), Heroes (Nov 1980), Fire (Dec. 1980). In the May/June 1981 issue, Koren announced that the magazine would "drop the heavy reliance on themes."

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favorite musicians, Greg's favorite artists. It's a catalog of Greg's 80s passions.

I've been robbed.

I would like to allude to these two disturbing and seemingly contradictory points by addressing the following theoretical questions and telling some funny personal stories:

- 1. Under what circumstances is a magazine influential?
- 2. What affects æsthetic and intellectual sophistication? (Is there a point at which it stops?)

Let's go back to that telephone pole on which the stark poster suddenly appeared. At the time, I imagined that one of those beautiful Wet beings from Los Angeles was driving across the country putting up posters, one in each city. Pah. Now I would be willing to bet \$100 that someone from the record store across the street received a package of Wets along with the poster. Record store guy walks out to the pole, staples up poster, goes back to store, sets stack of Wets on counter. Nancy walks up to pole, falls into a trance, walks across street, buys Wet.

I ask, what poster would get me - a 36 year old heap of souring cynicism—to cross the street today? I do not long to be 19 years old again — Yick! And yet, I am a bit sorry that as I age, I become increasingly discriminating. The more I see, the more I am able to — and do — understand events in wider and wider contexts ("another zine by an excited young person," "another loud rock band," "the bell bottoms again"). Fewer things—especially when it comes to magazines—can blindside me with their freshness, and I miss that.

And another thing. Will I, 17 years from now, look back and say, "Yick"? It's hard to fathom just how supremely sophisticated I would be at age 53 if my life was one rocketing trajectory of æsthetic, intellectual, social, and spiritual refinement. (And at 70? My god.) The improbability of this vision makes me believe that there are twists and dips in the process of aging, even if I don't know why.

Consider my parents, which I often do. My mother, 68, has spent her adult life switching "genres." Last year she worked for H&R Block during tax time. Several years before that, she ran a wearable art sale. Last weekend she went shopping for a camper van. One of my favorite things about her is that she keeps something to discover in front of her. In a way, she is maintaining a state of perpetual unsophistication.

It is unclear when my father, 67, a clinical psychologist until his retirement ten years ago, stopped in his path. I suspect it may have been about five years before he retired. He got stale and never picked up a new thread. Today, my father, whom I love, drinks a 750 ml bottle of sherry every evening, beginning around 4:00 p.m. We experience about five lucid minutes together every two weeks.

Whether Wet found me, or I found it, or I found Greg, who found my Wet and told me what he found — who can say? The brilliance was that we had each other, and we all knew that popular culture, sort-of-new wavey music, odd architecture, raw art, nakedness and funky clothes mattered. Today, for me, there is less of the kind of magic that Wet was. I do trust that there will be other magics.

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I asked my 5% year old son, Aaron, what his next "interest" (our polite word for "obsession") would be. We agreed that so far he has had four major periods: Construction, Power Ranger, Fire Fighter, and - the current one - Police. Aaron said, "I never know what the next one will be because it is always a surprise."

# A Discussion of the Performance of Wet Using the Nine Essential Magazine Functions Analysis System

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I would never expect any one magazine to perform every single magazine function. But when one gets as close as Wet did, by god, that's exciting. Let's take a look:

#### 1. - Picture Book Function

One of the things I enjoy looking at is the naked body. Wet provides. A favorite article is about swimmers bodies (Sept./Oct. 1981). Master swimmers — ages 46 to 76 — pose in their racing suits in front of a nylon parachute backdrop. "Well preserved older flesh," it says in the margin. This is just the sort of thing I want to know about. Another delight is "A Gallery of Noses" (March/April 1981). One side of the spread shows 16 noses belonging to Los Angeleans, the other, 16 New Yorkers' noses. In the text below, the participants describe themselves and their noses. A fascinating study of human variation and sameness. I should mention that Wet's photographs were all in black and white, and that — except for a feature on Helmut Newton's work — most of the nudity is brazenly ordinary and unglamorous.

When I called Leonard Koren and asked him about what magazines he reads now, he confessed that the one he's most interested in is *House & Garden* – what he called a magazine of "pornographic interiors."

#### 2. - Catalog Function

I was invited to teach a class of 6th graders about magazine making recently. I asked the teachers to have the kids bring their favorite magazine to our first session. A good batch of kids did not bring magazines, but actual catalogs—for stereo components and stuff. Though I

#### [Wet At A Glance]

- Sample of subjects covered in each issue (from Nov. 1980's table of contents): Fashion, Politics, Mental Health, Art. Youth, Cinema, Religion, Law, Outlaws, Business, Music, Science, Gourmet Bathing
- Subject headings assigned to Wet by Library of Congress: "Bathing customs. Periodicals" and "Erotica. Periodicals."
- Cartoonist Matt Groening got his start in Wet.
- Wet Writer/interviewer Kristine McKenna currently writes for The Los Angeles Times and other publications
- -Koren has since authored many books, among them Wabi-Sabi for Artists, Designers, Poets & Philosophers (Stone Bridge Press, 1994). How to Rake Leaves (Stone Bridge, 1993), and Success Stories: How Eleven of Japan's Most Interesting Businesses Came to Be (Chronicle Books, 1990). He is currently working on a book about the making of Wet.
- Wet's ad (from March/April 1981 issue): "Wet Magazine. You won't understand the 1980s without it."

was surprised, I shouldn't have been; when I was 15, I subscribed to Seventeen just to feverishly study the make-up ads.

Some magazines function quite legitimately as the link between you and your purchase (Factsheet 5, Feminist Baseball). Some magazines don't admit to being catalogs, but they are (American Baby, Vogue, Shape). This is probably necessary, but deception is never pleasant.

Today, I respect the fact that Wet's ads knew their place. They were stacked in boxes along the sides of pages; there were addresses and telephone numbers in 'em. What they offered was as exotic as the articles: flip books, isolation tanks, and a performance of "Chevrolet Training Film: The Remake." The "Right Reverend Robert Alexander" frequently advertised "Nondenominational/Nonsectarian Marriages" at "The Temple of Man" in Venice, California.

#### 3. - Heft Function

To be satisfying over the long haul, magazines need to tackle issues of substance. Articles may need length. I am grateful for the room Wet gave its subjects. Six rich pages for 33 year old [cartoonist] Mark Alan Stamaty (March/April 1981). Seven for Mel Edelman's "The Serious Building Climber's Handbook" (May/June 1981), complete with photos of fingerholds and suggested routes up.

It is impossible for me – even today – to not read Kristine McKenna's interviews. She pitches sometimes wildly, sometimes simply, but her questions elicit vivid portraits. She asked Nigerian author Amos Tutuola, "What is the worst evil that can befall a man?" To Merle Haggard: "Are you attracted to chaos?" Gang of Four's Andy Gill was asked, "What's the most overrated idea currently held by western culture?" He answered, "Individualism. Los Angeles."

#### 4. - Club Membership Function

A magazine's charisma depends on how much the reader senses the magazine as the voice of a particular club, and – this is the delicate part – how open that club is for new members. Here's the thing about Wet: as entranced as I was – as much as I imagined that Wet was created by a friendly crowd of fabulous people, always ready to push the envelope – I wasn't sure I was invited to the party. Sometimes I almost felt like an interloper. Now Greg, he never had this problem. These were his new friends, and Wet was his new stylebook. After the fashion photo spread "Men in Skirts" appeared (Nov 1980), he went to the thrift store and bought himself a nice gray wool one. (ok, it was probably me egging him on, and he never did wear it outside the apartment.)

When I talked to Leonard, he confirmed my impressions. Prior to and during the early years of Wet, he was actually hosting large "bath parties" (with 150 to 200 guests), held in part to repay model-friends who had posed for his "bath art" works. Wet grew out of the success of these parties, as a way to reach out to even more people. So he was inviting me, but I had my guard up. I might have let it down, if we hadn't driven all the way to Venice and parked our car on Melrose Place only to find ourselves in the middle of absolutely nothing—no vintage clothing shops, no crazy art, no people, no party. Chain link fence and distance.

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#### 5. - Tip Sheet Function

Classified heavy magazines are really on the verge of being newspapers, devoted as they are to the explicitly temporal. Furthermore, to run "help wanted" and "call for entries" notices is to precisely name your audience, something that makes sense for Chronicle of Higher Education, Pæts & Writers, and Pit & Quarry. Wisely, Wet never went here.

#### 6. - Deliverer of Goofiness Function

Here, Wet shines. Less caustic than National Lampoon, not as fart oriented as Mad Magazine, Wet manages to be playful without resorting to childishness. Well, sort of. The cover of the March/April 1981 issue features two pigs doing it. Recently I had this issue on the kitchen table, when the doorbell rang. It was the building engineer, coming to check our house. Not to be indecent, I thought I'd just turn the cover over, you know... But — ha ha! It's the same two pigs on the back cover.

#### 7. - How-to Handbook Function

One of my Wet issues did have some recipes. But Wet was no Bon Appétit, Herb Quarterly, or Knitting Times, that's for sure.

#### 8. - Puzzle Book Function

Wet never ran any crossword puzzles. A pity.

#### 9. - Vessel of the New and Fresh Function

Wet shot cannonballs of surprise every issue. There were little ones: "Boris Karloff used to sell real estate." "Florence Nightingale hoarded paper." Medium-sized real news, like the bit about how the Swiss Medical Association installed cold water arm baths along their highway so tired drivers would stick their arms in, increase circulation, revive awakeness, and reduce traffic accidents (Nov/Dec. 1977). And disturbing shocks, like the "Sex with the Dead" article (March/April 1981) and "This Gun for Hire: An American Soldier of Fortune" (Nov 1980). There's even an exclusive interview with "Ross Perot, Capitalist Commando" in the November 1980 issue, 12 years before his presidential attempt. It nearly knocks me over: Wet was where I first learned of ½ Japanese, Laurie Anderson, Ed Ruscha, and Frank Gehry—artists who all became important to me (or Greg).

Because it never isolated itself, but leapt from the mainstream into the margins, Wet was able to open me up and give me something new.

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# WHAT PEOPLE WHO'VE NEVER SEEN Wet BEFORE SAY ABOUT IT (IN 1997)

Shirley (who enjoyed Trouser Press during the early 1980s): "It makes me so nostalgic!" (Nancy: "Why?") "Because I can read it! There's normal typefaces! These days there's stupid magazines like Raygun. You might enjoy what they have to say, but you can't f-in read it."

Keith: "Where's the little ads in the back? I want little ads in the back."

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Jennifer: "Seems like a proto-zine. It has lots of the stuff people went on to do in smaller versions — commentary on popular culture, a tendency towards the subversive, the graphics, the subject matter..."

Linda (looking at issue with article entitled, "17 Beautiful Men Taking a Shower"): "This is still interesting!"

Nick: "It's OK. Reminds me of Nancy's Magazine."

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<sup>1. -</sup> In my defense (sort of), N'sM is also a big fat rip off of Better Homes & Gardens, the other magazine I subscribed to in the early 1980s. I respected BH&G's general sweep and newsy bits about interior decorating product development. In fact, I would've liked Wet even more if it had a craft section.

<sup>2. —</sup> GOD is this embarrassing: in 1987, I lined up myself and two friends so our noses could be photographed and compared. Yes, I thought I thought of it first.

National and
International Events
I Think
I was Aware of
During the Time
I Subscribed
To Wet

#### 1979

Three Mile Island

Moral Majority founded

John Wayne dies

"We Are Family" by Chie

The Who concert, stampede, deaths

#### 1980

Reagan elected
Lech Walesa leads Polish shipyard workers strike
Double-digit inflation
CNN goes on the air
Mon Oncle d'Amerique with Gérard Dépardieu
"Sailing" by Christopher Cross
Caucho by Steely Dan
Second Edition by Public Image Ltd.
Remain in Light by Talking Heads
Ian Curtis (Joy Division) hangs himself
John Lennon shot
Mount St. Helens erupts
U.S. boycotts Olympics in Moscow
Walkmans

#### 1981

Iran releases hostages
"The Tide is High" by Blondie
"Physical" by Olivia Newton-John
Charles & Di marry
Bob Marley dies



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Wet, November, 1980
Executive Ed.tor Elizabeth Freeman
Photo Design: Bill Womack, Wippo, Kathy Hilburn
Photo/design: Drancel Neros



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B:liboard, December 28, 1996 Editor in Chief: Timothy White Art Director: Jeff Nisbet

#### Listening In

Pick up a copy of Billboard magazine and skip to the last few pages. There you'll find the ultimate icon of pop music authority – the "Hot 100 chart." This paper pronouncement tells the story of a single record's performance. How high it climbed, how it beat its competition into the top ten, how long it lingered before disappearing into pop heaven.

Billboard has been ranking popular music and publishing its charts every week since July 1940. The formula for measuring popularity has shifted over the years, but some combination of radio play, sales, and jukebox selection has always yielded a list that, once placed in my adolescent hands, opened a window to a world outside my own. The view could be harsh. For no matter how loudly I would cheer on a beloved record, the sound couldn't travel beyond my room. And often the song would flicker and die before anyone could fall in love with its charm. But even after such disappointment, I accepted Billboard's authority and the inviolability of its charts as the true snapshot of the moment.

I've used these snapshots to build my own scrapbook. The color of the ink, the pattern of the columns, the look of the record's title woven into the list. These are the odd memories bound between the covers. A drifting, familiar melody doesn't coax me back to ocean spray and sunshine, or afterschool parties, laughter or woodfires. I don't remember any of the poignant moments that pop music was invented to surround. Instead I remember the pages from this magazine.

It's serious. Long ago, my best friend Helen's mom scolded me for investing so much brain power into this silly hobby. Others laughed it off as trivial, and who could disagree? But inconsequential or monumental, my romance with the charts was vital, and wasn't born out of a good memory for detail. It became a lifeline for me, a way of cataloguing and coping with a world both frightening and uncontrollable.

I don't want to tell you too much. But as I graduated from childhood into adolescence my world began to shrink. For many years I was a deeply nervous child. I was either sick or afraid of being sick and I could neither predict nor cure this curse. My body demonized me – it was an enemy. And as the enemy took hold, solitude became my only security. Except for the imposed community of school, for which I braced myself every morning, I was alone. Within my room, within our house, behind barricades of books, I could finally exhale. I squeezed the treacherous air from my lungs. I shut my eyes and lowered my forehead onto my polished wooden desk. I had made it through another gauntlet of a day, back to an ever-suffocating shelter. And by my side, always by my side, was the radio.

I can tell you the exact day – October 18, 1970 – when my sealed world stopped shrinking. I was thirteen, it was Sunday morning, The radio dial absently snagged on a show that

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caught my attention. "American Top 40" was a newly syndicated show that simply played a countdown, from 40 to 1, of the *Billboard* magazine "Hot 100 Singles Chart."

That morning, as usual, my parents were preparing for work, gathering cameras and lights to photograph another wedding. My sisters were busy with sisterly things. So I huddled undisturbed for the three hour show, meticulously transcribing the chart from the radio. I still have that ruled sheet of notebook paper, and holding it now, I can't really say what motivated me; perhaps the clean order of a list, or the official nature of the program and the chart. Science. I imagined this mythic "Billboard" as a sea of computers counting every cash register ringing in every record shop, every needle touching spinning grooves at every radio station. The dispassionate documentation of passionate music. Truth without persuasion.

You probably wouldn't recognize most of the titles on that first chart. Many records that reach the top forty never catch on nationally. They rest buried as murky, minor hits by forgotten artists. Even though the radio was my closest friend, its local nature had shielded me from an oasis of music that was being applauded in other pockets of the country. But I learned every one of these songs by heart. Next Sunday I returned to my post, and the Sunday after that. A ritual had begun, and for the first time in my life I felt my small, isolated room had a window into a broader culture.

For months I collected, studied, averaged and totaled the weekly charts. These fragile lists were twisted around every statistical analysis that a thirteen year old could devise. I was married to them. With two radios running, I spent whole days listing every record played, then comparing the numbers with the official charts. Today, the ubiquitous *Billboard* logo is attached to everything from awards shows to CDs. You can pick up the magazine in newsstands all over town. But in 1970, it buried itself, invisible. And despite my study, I had never seen an actual copy of this mysterious "Billboard Hot 100." I had no idea what floated beneath the fortieth parallel.

Then, in early 1971, a little gift shop opened a few blocks from home, in a strip mall planted across the street from school. "World of Gifts" had its front door covered with strips of tiny bells that clattered long after you passed through its perfume-and-candle-scented threshold. Between macrame planters and carved wooden elephants was a modest record department. I had detoured through the shop on my way home from school, and there I stood, transfixed by a paper vision. Scotch-taped to the front counter was the Billboard Hot 100 chart. It was a brand new list, posted days before the Sunday radio broadcast. And I had to have it. I grabbed a sheet of notebook paper and, with trembling fingers, began penciling out the chart, line by line. Patricia, the shop's glamorous owner, had been watching me for some time when she interrupted my furious work.

"My God! You're not writing down that entire list, are you? I can't have you huddling over the counter for hours." A pair of oversized aviator glasses exaggerated her disbelief.

"Yes... I'm sorry. I mean, if it's okay. ... I can write really fast." I had never confessed my curious hobby to anyone, and I didn't know how to explain why I had to do this. Even my parents never questioned me, happy that finally something seemed to calm me down. I had to finish, but I feared she would order me out or demand an explanation. She must have

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sensed my panic or my harmlessness. Her bracelets clattered as she ground out her cigarette behind the counter. Her face softened, and behind a billow of smoke, she beamed almost motherly.

"Well, if you've got to have that list, I'll save it for you when I put the new one up."

"Really? That would be great!" I was still copying steadily and down to line ninety when I noticed the ragged left hand edge of the page. It had been ripped out of the magazine. I pushed my luck.

"Do you keep the whole magazine?"

"We usually throw them out."

My eyes widened and magnified in her lenses. She knew my next question.

"Okay, I'll bring you whatever I've got left at home," she jangled.

I felt my room's window widening a little bit more.

It seems funny to imagine this young boy racing back to his monastery, a roll of magazines under his arm, expecting to have the secrets of the music world revealed to him. Unbundled and spread open, what lay before me was a surprise. *Billboard* is a trade journal, after all, written in the industry's coded jargon, with stories about manufacturing contracts, distribution deals, sell-through, rack jobbing. The magazine was not for fans, but for employees. Music was a product, and sales and profits were its measure. Even reviews of new releases stressed sales and airplay predictions.

Was I horrified at discovering that, behind the benign, statistical curtain, like the wizard in the Emerald City, was a marketing machine? Not at all. The workings of the industry fascinated me. I imagined these invisible men and women sweating to make a record a hit or a group a star, and the public deciding to accept or reject the offer like a spoiled child. Monumental ad campaigns unfolded in these pages celebrating records that would never be heard. Even more wonderful, someone's neglected song, cast overboard like ballast by a machine that had had its fill, would land onto some DJ's turntable, catch on fire and burst through the airwaves. If there were a magic key to popularity, this crowd hadn't found it.

Every Thursday, after school, I would make World of Gifts my home, waiting for Patricia to arrive and post the new chart. My illness had tempered enough for me to do odd tasks and run errands in exchange for her old copies. Sometimes I would idle through the shop for hours, waiting patiently, thumbing through the new albums. Since I knew every record on the charts, I was helpful when someone's mom would dart in with a fragment of a lyric from a record her daughter had to have for her birthday. Sometimes kids from my school would stop in to browse. This was my secret haven, and I hoped they would ignore me like they did in class. They usually passed me like another shelf of scented candles.

One evening, Bobby B. pushed open the door, his bulk rattling the bells into spasms. He was the hulking bully-king of my 8th grade class, someone whom I always granted a wide berth. I expected him to barrel through to the libido-rock section, but instead he paused anxiously by the 45rpm counter, where the cashier and I were posted. He spoke softly.

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"Do you have the record that goes, 'What I got they used to call the blues'?"

The cashier stared blankly. She wasn't the music hound that I was. She didn't know anything.

"'Rainy Days and Mondays,'" I blurted out. "It's by the Carpenters."

"That's it. Yeah. 'Rainy Days and Mondays.'" Bobby nodded towards me without recognition, but with an embarrassed smile. I reached behind me and pulled a copy from the bin marked #5. (With Bobby's help, the record would climb to #2 where it remained for two weeks, just behind Carole King's "It's Too Late.") Bobby admired the sleeve, with its blue and white silhouette of Karen and Richard, made his purchase and left the shop. I had never spoken to him before or since, and felt odd to have been part of this strange intimacy.

I know he probably bought the record for his baby sister or girlfriend or ailing mother. But for all these years I've imagined Bobby sitting pensively in front of his stereo, lifting the needle off the record to hear it again and again, a phone ringing unanswered in the other room with an invitation to one more party, one more night.

Like a parent, Billboard and its charts granted me permission. Under the guise of "research," I could explore and enjoy music that might be ridiculed publicly by my peers. Syrupy ballads, down-home country, deep soul. In the early 70s, pop music was an amazing grab bag of regionalism and national crazes. Radio stations really did broadcast what today's market-niched-to-death radio mockingly pretends to embrace: "true variety." The charts compiled this patchwork into a glorious document that didn't just indicate what was "cool," but also what people cared about at the time. Andy Williams next to the Rolling Stones next to Freddy Fender next to Ike & Tina Turner. I guess instead of taste, I was developing empathy. I loved them all. Even the goofiest songs that are laughed at now had a reason for their popularity. They were hits. People bought them. I'd like to think I understood that although they were mere slivers off of the mountain of culture, these records were moments shared among a massive and diverse population. They meant something to people then. That's what I thought they liked "out there."

And "out there" was where I ached be.

Through Billboard, I had discovered a window, but never quite found a door. My chronic solitude still tethered me to my room. So I never learned how to socialize, how to chat or interact. Except through the radio, I didn't learn about romance or flirting or desire. I didn't understand sports or hanging out, or parties, or fashion. I didn't know it then but, except through songs, I didn't understand nighttime. Or being carefree, and how a body is supposed to feel and behave.

Perhaps it all boils down to popularity. I wanted to know how records became popular. How they shuffled in obscurity until suddenly demanding desire, and how that desire might endure. My appetite was ready to consume the entire history of popular music. I had discovered reference books that catalogued all the *Billboard* charts. I memorized them. My dad had been overseeing a small portrait studio in downtown Washington. I would ride down

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with him from our suburban home, loop around the mall and jump out at the Library of Congress, where I had discovered the complete bound collection of *Billboard* issues. The books were thick and awkward and their brittle edges snapped into dust under my clumsy hands. I copied pages down in a shorthand I had invented for the occasion, and typed the charts up at night. I knew it all.

This obsession of mine seemed to be slowly undermining my disease. I could function and travel and almost imagine what "normal" might feel like. Maybe this expertise could even give me a slice of popularity. My notebooks were covered with extra copies of the Hot 100 chart. I recited song lyrics and hits from the past at the drop of a hat. Students would quiz me just to see if I had an answer. I expected my enthusiasm to make me a hero, not brand me as eccentric. This was pop music. These were the hits. They were supposed to like them. But there I was reciting to a crowd that was amused more by this odd little fellow spouting statistics than by anything he was saying. They didn't care about the biggest hits of 1962.

I had gotten it all wrong.

Now I see that at the same time I was listening so much, I was missing so much. Music for me was reduced to the recorded, merchandisable object. That is what the *Billboard* charts measured, that is what the machine pushed, and that is what I loved. The stories behind the songs, the personalities that wrote and made the music, the inspiration, completely eluded me. I couldn't tell you how many members were in a given group or their names, but I could list all of their hits. I wasn't a fan, I was a scientist. I had never felt the joyous, giddy rush, the dancing and singing that happened outside the pages of my beloved magazine. My window was really a glass wall.

High school, graduation, college, career. These things I couldn't have imagined when my world was a tiny, closed room. But step by step, I pushed myself along a path through larger rooms that could hold more than one, to windows and doors that led to more windows and more doors. Through it all I followed the magazine and the music faithfully. I ran a record department, programmed the college radio station, and, believe it or not, worked for a time as a club DJ.

For many years I was buying everything that rose into Billboard's top 60, amassing a collection of ten thousand records. I sealed them in plastic, catalogued them and displayed them proudly on long bookshelves. Things have changed. What once was a passion ended up feeling like a curse. For me the magic had dwindled out of the industry. I no longer liked the music that was churned out, and I didn't even bother playing most of the records I bought. When vinyl 45s disappeared from stores around 1991, I stopped buying new music or paying close attention to the charts. Today they're in boxes in a friend's basement in Oakland, together with my notebooks filled with all my charts. I haven't looked at them for years.

But I still keep a few reference books at hand. And with Tower Records around the corner from my home, I still drift by the magazine rack every week to flip through the new issue of *Billboard*. I don't recognize many titles on the Hot 100 anymore. And when I do hear new music that is riding the charts, I am almost always disappointed. It all just sounds like

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stuff. Rap stuff or Hootie stuff or Alterno-stuff. Nothing vital. Nothing grabs me like, say, the first time I heard the opening chords of Bennie & the Jets.

I listen to old records now. Not the big hits that wore me out, but obscure records that barely dented the pop charts. Maybe I'm hibernating in the past until a new cloud of pop pleasure descends—the next big thing, perhaps. I think it came and went this past year. That's how long "big things" last these days. Inspecting Billboard on the web, while no match for its printed counterpart, is at least convenient. I just visited the site, and saw that Los Del Rio's Bayside Boys mix of the Macarena has won the crown for the biggest hit of 1996. Having been #1 for 14 weeks in a row, and back in the top ten after 55 weeks on the chart, this is no surprise.

You couldn't escape it. Weddings, meetings, conventions, nightclubs and birthday parties were filled with boys and girls and men and women doing this dopey, infectious dance. Country versions and swing versions and big band versions appeared. The giddiness and dumbness and emptiness and joy of pop music returned. For a moment, above all the groans from the sophisticates, silliness became profound. Even lonely arms could glide through dissolved glass, swaying out front to the beat, then bent to the neck, sides and back. The record was a hit. People bought it. Here was my fractured fantasy come true – pop music connecting the world inside and out. Finally, after such a long, empty spell, a new snapshot

for my album. I couldn't have been happier.

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Not 100 Chart Billboard, February 13, 1971

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message and the audience hardly ever makes a move towards better communication. Imagine hearing noises over the phone while you are trying to listen to the other person on the line, or receiving static on your TV! These pyrotechnical effects do not enhance reception of the message; they only help in making the audience "aware" of the medium the message is being transmitted though.

Yet there is something about Carson's work that is truly a sign of the times. When you say that "...what I end up remembering about the essay is not so much what I read, but how difficult it was to read at all...," you seem to be describing the problem I have when surfing the Net. For I am not able to remember content or design of the pages I visit, since the only thing I am concerned about is: how I got there, and what pages can I go to if I press the "back" button. The web, and Carson's work, seem to be obliging people to develop some kind of sixth sense: a sense of location.

#### Dear Emigre.

Gaston, Internet

I just want to thank you for your great magazine. It keeps us informed and really inspires us. Zuzana Licko's fonts are highly appreciated in our small, but hard working graphic design community.

Nedjeljko Spoljar, Sensus Design Factory, Zagreb, Croatia

#### Dear Emigre,

I'd like to comment on an article you were involved in that was published in Print for Sept./ Oct 1992 titled "Kicking Up a Little Dust." I'm a senior graphic design student at the Montserrat College of Art in Beverly, Massachusetts, which is located just outside Boston. Before reading the article I thought design should only be created in the "International Style." I couldn't see it any other way. I didn't like any other way. Until I read this. It opened my mind and made me see the whole picture. I now understand what you guys are doing. And I love it. I now feel I can design without a grid. I can loosen up a little. Not to be a tight-ass "Information Architect" HA HA HA. Although I will always love the Modernist look as well as Vignelli's work, too, I now feel that I can do whatever I wish. Screw the critics. "Out with the old and in with the new." Or perhaps "In with the old and out with the new." Thanks Chris D. Internet

#### Dear Emigre,

This is a fan letter. I love your mailings. They are beautiful. Out of all the mailings and advertisements I get, yours are the only ones I read cover-to-cover and hang on the wall. My teenagers beg for the font posters, but I won't let them have them. (They do hang up bicycle and snowboard magazine ads created with your fonts.) I will be ordering more fonts soon. Thanks.

Susan Edmondson, Internet

#### Dear Emigre.

I'm sure you hate it when people write in and try to give you ideas for your magazine, but I decided to try anyway. First off, I want to go on the record as saying that I like the new (not really all that new anymore) format. Sure, I miss the big pictures, the unique size and the acres and acres of beautiful design, but it fits into my booksack now. I enjoy the new focus, but the theoretical essays/ramblings do often bore, confuse and frustrate, mostly confuse, me. That's why I'm writing.

The new focus has given me a concept of the theoretical ideas that should and do shape what our profession does and how it works in the theoretical sense. My problem is that it is all so abstract. I have all of these theories floating around in my head, but I don't understand how these proposed ideas are supposed to manifest themselves in my work. Maybe I'm just dumb, or maybe it's because I couldn't go to a more theoretical-based school than Louisiana State University. But I think that there are other people in the same boat as I am.

In Emigre 19 Katherine McCoy said that the Post-Structural theories had been digested and internalized at Cranbrook. I want to see how and where it comes out. Rick Vermeulen, in Eye 21, said he would like to see a more concrete æsthetic discussion, "I want to know something about the actual design and the reason why it works." I'm not asking for pictures to rip off, so that I can turn around and say "Here is where I implemented Barthes' theory of..." I'm looking for descriptions of people's methods for implementing their ideas. I would like to hear my æsthetic role models' theories about how and what they do, and I would like to see my philosophical role models' theories manifest themselves in how and what they do.

It would be amazing to read the theories of some of the æsthetic superstars of design, such as: Rick Valicenti, April Greiman, Ed Fella, Elliott Earls, Jonathan Barnbrook, the Makelas, Tibor Kalman, Chipp Kidd, Allen Hori, Reverb, Hard Werken, Studio Dumbar, just to name a few. And it would be equally impressive to see how people like Andrew Blauvelt, Anne Burdick, Brian Schorn, Putch Tu, Lorraine Wild, Louise Sandhaus and Design/Writing/Research put their ideas into practice.

In the book Graphic Design Inspirations and Innovations, Rebeca Mendez presented a very interesting, although brief, explanation of what she does and how her theories appear in her work. It was tremendously interesting, and I think people would accept and understand theory more if they could see how some of the theorists put their ideas into their work.

The way I see it, our profession seems to have drawn a distinct line between practice and theory. But I think that almost all designers have their own personal theories that guide their practice, and I think it would benefit the profession if we could explain and demonstrate these ideas to each other.

You have done some amazing work to erase that line; I would just like to see it erased even more. Devoted to theory-in-practice and practice-in-theory would be great. Then again, that's just my own opinion, and I may just be slow and/or dumb.

Your pal,

Tal Leming, Baton Rouge, Louisiana

#### Response:

Thank you for your great letter.

Here's how I understand it all works: The theories are meant to analyze design more than to be used as a particular approach or method by which to make design. Ellen Lupton put it this way in the book Design, Writing Research: "...we see deconstruction as a critical process — an act of questioning."

The theories have brought into question standard design procedures and have exposed, among other things, how the designer's intentions do not necessarily match the way the audience interprets a design. While this knowledge doesn't exactly help you produce your designs, it does help give a more realistic picture of how design operates within society.

I, too, read Rick Vermeulen's remark in Eye, and thought it ironic, as Emigre has dealt with the issues he raised to a point of repetitiveness. We have featured lengthy interviews with most of the people on your list delving into the hows and whys. I, too, want to know something about the actual design and the reason why it works. The truth of the matter is there comes a time when you run out of words describing design: perhaps this is the point at which design starts.

In closing, I say Louisiana State University must be doing something right, since you seem anxious to participate in the debate and you are asking all the right questions. That's always a good thing for design.

Rudy VanderLans, Berkeley, California

#### Of Note:

We are proud to announce that Emigre has won the 1996 Publish Magazine Impact Award. Also, "TOC", the project produced by Steve Tomasula and Stephen Farrell, published in Emigre 37, has won an award in the 7th Annual International Abiko Quarterly Fiction Contest.

VENT, RESPOND, COMMENT OR CRITICIZE:

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EMIGRE NO.41

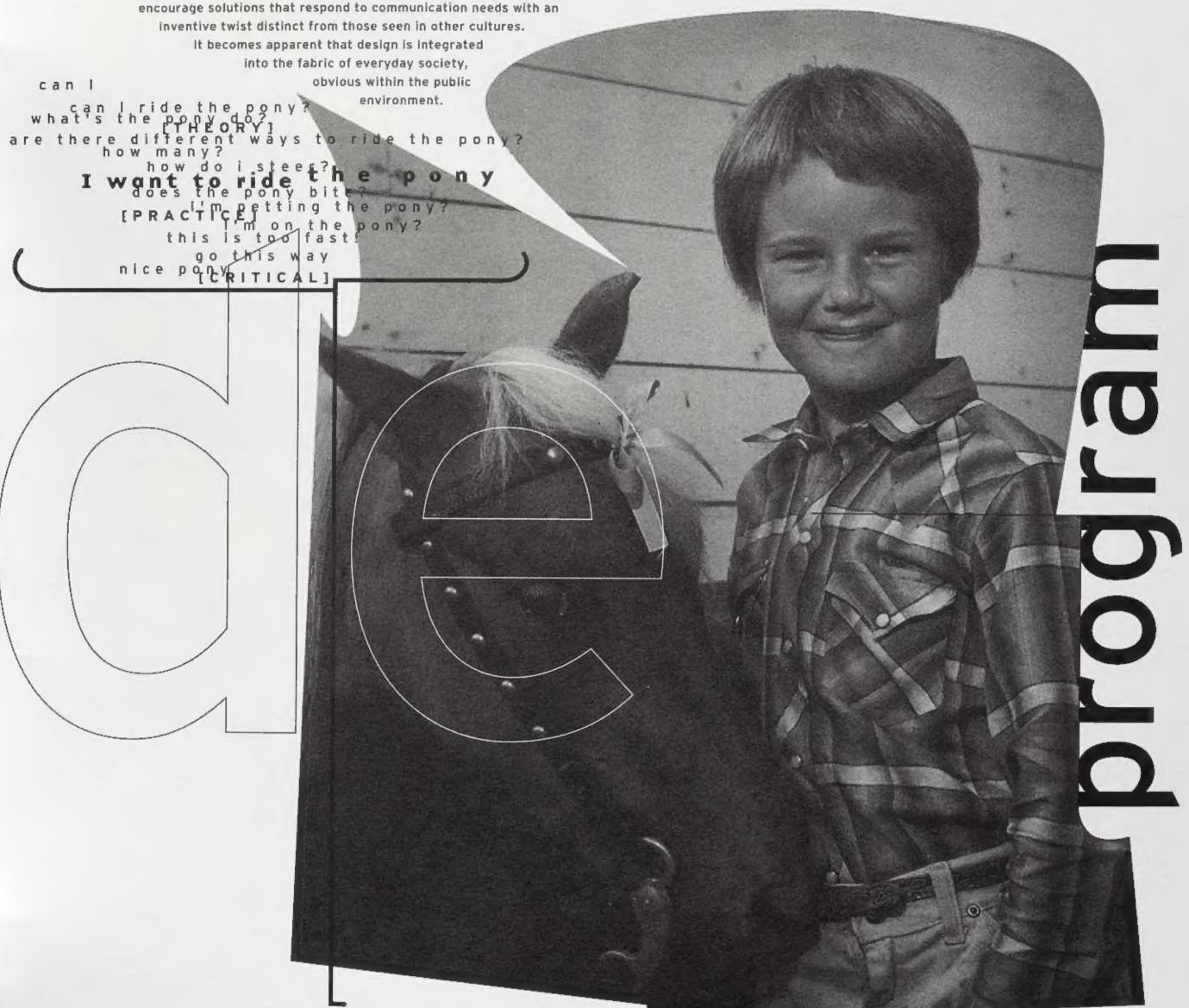
WE LIVE IN a culture which allows voyeuristic Leastern Michigan University participation using tools linked

July 7 to July 25, 1997 to global ethernets. De Program

> no. 9 seeks to link design theory and practice, engaging the participants in a transdisciplinary dialogue analyzing, viewing, and discussing those cultural linkages that are the basis for attitudes that facilitate and inspire contemporary design thinking. The program involves thematically related studio projects, visitations, discussion sessions, presentations and seminars collectively structured to facilitate dialogue, connection and context. Collectively the intent is to break down notions, to consider other modes and conditions that inform the development of communication response.

> > In the early part of the twentleth century major movements central to

concepts in modern design were forming. In one culture, the Netherlands, a continuous connection from modern's Inception to present day practitioners is evident. Key figures in the early modern movement in the Netherlands such as Piet Zwart, Paul Schuitema, Dick Elffers and Gerrit Rietveld have a direct influence on contemporary practicing designers and commissioners. In the Netherlands, clients, designers and society accept and



The program is open to professional designers, graduate students, educators, and select undergraduate candidates (upon portfolio review: 10 to 20 slides). Students are eligible for three graduate or undergraduate credits. For application information contact either Doug Kisor or Susan LaPorte. Return the application form with a good faith deposit of \$300.00 supplies, personal ground transportation payable to Eastern Michigan University. If and spending money. accepted the fee is applied toward the program cost, upon non-acceptance the fee is returned. Covering a three week period from

Students are responsible for airfare and ground transportation to and from London, England. Candidates need to allow extra funds for some meals, a few

July 7 - 25, 1997, the program is based in London & Rotterdam with side trips to Amsterdam, Den Haag, Breda, Antwerp, and other select locations.

#### CONTACTS

\$3000.00 APPLICATION DEADLINE: 114 Ford Hall Friday, April

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